

Guide



School and campus security

A guide to security systems, cameras, door locks and devices



Educational facilities should be geared towards one thing only - to provide an environment conducive to learning. To achieve this, a strong foundation of safety is necessary and that comes from installing a comprehensive security system for schools and campuses from reputable school security companies - one that encompasses a school and campus alarm system, access control, door locks and video security as well as other school security solutions.

This guide is your resource for all the information you need to better understand security solutions for schools and college campuses. It possesses the key information you need to know about each type of security solution, the potential use cases and how to select the best system for your educational facility with the help of checklists and key questions.

School and campus security systems

With a greater focus on security systems for schools and campuses over the past decade, educational facilities have been adopting security cameras for schools and university campuses as well as school alarm systems and effective access control. The National Center for Education Statistics stated that between 2009–10 and 2019–20, the percentage of public schools reporting the use of school security solutions increased, with a [49% increase in the use of security cameras](#), a 22% increase for ID badges and a 6% increase for access control.

Security alarm systems for schools and campuses

An effective school alarm system can help secure educational facilities from theft, unauthorized access, fire and natural disasters - some of which need to be adhered to as part of local building codes. By installing perimeter alarms, any intrusion event can trigger the school alarm system, which would emit a loud siren and/or flashing lights, helping to ensure any intruder is made aware that their trespassing has alerted the security team and the relevant authorities.

A sensor alarm for doors can also help school administrators detect events like doors left ajar and jammed locks. Door security alarms can be triggered through a motion sensor alarm, vibration detector, a sensor alarm on a door or via infrared.





Differences between a school security alarm system and campus security alarm systems

Depending on the setting, whether it's a school alarm system for a K-12 single building or a college campus security alarm system for a sprawling multi-building complex, integrated security systems for schools and campuses help protect students and faculty.

For single building facilities, an alarm system for schools can be installed that provides enhanced situational awareness, both indoors and outdoors.

For example, when a fire alarm is triggered, the alert is sent to the security team via the school alarm system and, with the supporting mapping software, they are able to see where in the school that alarm was triggered. This school alarm system information can then be shared with the relevant staff or first responders who can respond to the situation without having to search for the alarm location themselves, saving precious time.

With university campus security systems, operators need to be alerted to events taking place in multiple locations. Unlike a security alarm system for schools that alerts operators to an event taking place within a short walking distance from the control room, operators of campus security systems may be alerted to an incident that is a driving distance away from their control room. Door security alarms would be required for entrances and exits, staff rooms, data rooms, libraries, gyms and other facilities that are typically found across a university campus.

Access control and school classroom door locks and devices

Access control for schools and college campuses

It's vital that educational facilities implement school and college campus security solutions that are able to allow authorized individuals onto their sites and keep unauthorized individuals out.

Access control systems are keyless entry systems that are used to secure both outdoor and indoor environments, from parking lots to classrooms. With multiple access control methods available, from keypads to biometrics to mobile-based, it's important that you find the solution that best fits into your [school safety solution](#).

Whether it is during the school day, at night, or even during the weekend, schools and universities need to ensure their facilities remain secure at all times. With an advanced

access control system that incorporates the best [school door locks](#) and door sensor alarms installed at various campus and school security checkpoints, unauthorized individuals will be unable to gain access to restricted buildings as they won't possess the right credentials.

Should they decide to force entry, an alert is sent to the security system for schools and universities, notifying the operator of an intrusion. All access events are reported in an activity log, allowing operators to see who is accessing what and when. With effective door locks that include a security alarm for the door or a sensor alarm for the door, you can go even further with securing restricted areas within a building.





Types of access control solutions

The best door sensor alarms and locks, as part of a modern access control security system for schools and college campuses, will allow those with the correct credentials to easily gain access to a building, classroom or school facility.

Schools and campuses can provide such credentials to students, staff and even planned visitors or vendors, in the form of badges, as part of an on-premise solution, or via cloud-based mobile access, where credentials can be sent digitally to the individual's smartphone.

An on-premise access control security system for schools is hosted on your own servers and kept in-house, which helps your team take sole management of the settings, connections and controls without having to rely on a third-party vendor.

With a cloud-based access control system, access events can be managed remotely at any time - meaning the operator does not have to be on-site to authorize access, adjust settings and hand out credentials. Not only does this type of security system for schools help to increase efficiency and reduce costs, but it is also quick to deploy and scale in size.



School door locks and devices

Having effective school door locks is essential to a school's safety plan. Not only do they help safeguard students, staff and visitors during emergencies but they also support efforts in deterring theft, anti-social behavior and other illegal activities.

Key vs. keyless school security door locks

The [National Center for Education Statistics](#) stated that in 2019-20, 97% of schools had some form of a door lock for school safety.

Key-operated door locks, as you probably know, require a physical key to obtain access and are common across many settings, including schools, even if they may seem antiquated when compared to keyless school safety door locks. They still offer good levels of security but it can be argued that key-operated locks can prove to be more complex to manage than keyless school security door locks.

With [access control hardware](#) and software making huge strides over the past decade or two, there are plenty of viable keyless school safety door locks on the market. Keyless locks remove the need for keys and instead rely on a variety of electronic devices that manage access.

These electronic school security door locks have proven to be a worthwhile investment for schools and colleges as they've brought benefits such as improved security, an easier experience for users and, over time, a good return on investment.

Exterior school security door locks

Exterior school access points, those found along the perimeter of a school, see a lot of traffic with a large number of students, staff and visitors entering and exiting the school. As a result, the school safety door locks at exterior access points need to be easy to use and manage, as well as compliant with building and fire codes. Most keyless door locks are compliant and are easy to manage in an emergency. Don't forget about the use of panic bars, which provide a method of quick evacuation.

Interior school security door locks

When it comes to interior school door locks, you should keep in mind that classroom security locks will be required, as well as locks for staff rooms, offices and other restricted spaces.

Door locks for all of these spaces need to be easy to use and manage in emergencies and lockdown situations. For example, teachers should be able to easily control the classroom security lock from the inside.

According to the [National Center for Education Statistics](#), in 2019-20, 1 in 4 public schools in the United States lacked classroom doors that can be locked from the inside. This poses a risk to the teacher or staff member who would need to exit the classroom in order to lock the door during an emergency.

In addition to having classroom security locks that can be controlled from the inside of the room, first responders need to be unimpeded when accessing such spaces without the right credentials and these door locks also need to adhere to building and fire codes.





Types of classroom door locks and devices

Cylindrical lever locks

Used most commonly for interior doors within schools that require little security. A cylindrical lever lock features a door handle on both sides of the door and its mechanism features a small cylinder, hence the name for these school safety door locks.

Pros

- Quick to install and repair as well as being easy to operate for users.
- Available in multiple styles to suit different designs.

Cons

- Managing and replacing school keys for this type of lock could be a huge task, depending on the number of users, and associated costs could spiral quickly.
- If the key to a school door lock is lost, the security of the school could be compromised should the lost key fall into the wrong hands.
- Lacks the functionality for more advanced security features, including remote door unlock.

Mortise locks

Commonly used to deter forced entry, mortise locks feature a strike plate with the deadbolt found inside the lock's mechanism. Such a door lock for school safety is usually found on exterior-facing school doors, as they provide added strength compared to cylindrical locks, but can equally be suited to interior use as well, depending on the thickness of the doors.

Pros

- Heavy-duty and provides great protection against frequent use and forced entry.
- Easy to maintain.
- A more visually aesthetic design, compared to a cylindrical lever lock.

Cons

- As these school security door locks are heavy-duty, they require a large pocket inside the door during installation. Depending on the thickness and material of your school doors, this lock may not be a viable option.
- Security could be compromised should a key be lost or stolen by an unauthorized individual.
- As with cylindrical lever locks, mortise locks don't possess the latest security features commonly found in electronic locks and devices, such as automatic locking.



Deadbolt locks

Deadbolt locks are commonly used alongside other types of school door locks for additional security. Deadbolt locks are found on interior doors within schools, making them a potential option for classroom security locks.

Pros

- Easy to install and maintain.
- The sturdy design makes it a secure lock where its strength is unlikely to be compromised easily.

Cons

- Deadbolt locks usually require a minimum of 35mm of door thickness to install correctly. This may make this lock unsuitable for the interior doors found in classrooms, staff rooms and other spaces.
- As with the previously mentioned school door lock systems, deadbolt locks also don't possess the latest security features and, should keys be obtained by intruders, the security of the door is compromised.

Panic bars

Panic bars are an essential requirement for schools and colleges so that students, staff and visitors can evacuate the building safely in an emergency. These bars have a dogging feature, which can be either mechanical or electrical, that enables the latches to be held retracted to create that push and pull method.

For use in schools, it is important to remember that users of all ages and sizes may be required to use a panic bar, from a small student to a disabled staff member. Therefore, panic bars must be accessible for all users, and require a sufficient amount of force to operate but not too much that some struggle to release the latch.





Keyless school door locks and devices

Keyless lock solutions – which can be either wired or [wireless lock sets](#) – operate the school door locks and classroom security locks. To operate these locks, a device, whether it be a keypad, RFID reader or another device altogether, is usually installed alongside the door to grant or deny access.

Keypads

Keypads require users to input a PIN code to gain access. Within schools, these types of school door lock systems are more likely to be used on doors that guard restricted spaces, such as staff rooms, storage spaces or server rooms.

Capable of providing either one PIN code for all users or unique PIN codes for each user, keypads are sometimes used alongside a key-operated lock for added security.

Pros

- Improved security as you don't need to worry about losing keys and compromising security as a result.
- Keyless door locks for school safety provide other security features such as automatic locking.
- When integrated with the school's access control system, the security team can receive real-time notifications of emergencies which allows them to respond quickly.

Cons

- As PIN codes are required to successfully operate a keypad lock, users can forget their code meaning they would be unable to obtain access.
- To maintain security, PIN codes will need to be updated routinely and as and when students eventually graduate from school or staff leave their positions.
- When a keypad device is used alongside a key-operated school safety door lock, users must operate both locks to gain access, which can make it a difficult user experience.

RFID key cards and key fobs

Commonly seen across many settings, RFID key cards and key fobs are also used by schools and colleges to allow students, staff and visitors to get access to certain spaces within their buildings. Easy to use, these RFID-enabled objects can enable access by simply swiping them in close proximity to a reader near the door.

Pros

- Easy operation and maintenance.
- Key cards can also be used as an ID badge.
- Can be programmed to allow time restrictions and special location permissions. This feature is very handy for security personnel who can ensure certain users or groups of users, like students or visitors, are unable to access school property outside of hours.
- The security team can receive real-time emergency alerts which enables a faster response and even an auto-lockdown, should the situation require.
- An activity log for each reader, card and fob can be obtained to accelerate investigation times.
- If a key card is reported lost or stolen, the security team can deactivate the card rendering it unusable.

Cons

- Unlike a key card, a key fob is much smaller in size and can not include visual ID information.
- Can be easily damaged due to its small size.
- Replacing and issuing key cards and key fobs can be costly, especially if this happens frequently.
- Key cards and key fobs can be copied using specific devices which would lead to compromised security.





Mobile access control

Similar to the key card and fob method, mobile access control allows the user, whether it is a student, staff or visitor, to gain access to restricted spaces with the use of their mobile devices.

These mobile devices would contain the credential information needed to access buildings, rooms and spaces so the user would simply need to swipe or have the mobile device in close proximity to the reader to unlock a door.

Pros

- Mobile devices are unlikely to be forgotten or lost by an individual compared to a key card or fob.
- Allows security personnel to grant access to teachers and staff so they can easily access spaces where students aren't permitted.
- Easy to manage - credentials can be provided or revoked quickly.
- For college campuses, mobile access solutions would allow students, who usually carry mobile devices, to access spaces other than just classrooms and lecture rooms. They can access libraries, labs and student union spaces among other facilities.
- Mobile access can be combined with a RFID key card solution on the same school door lock device with access control systems, such as [Avigilon's access control](#).

Cons

- Not an ideal solution for K-12 schools as not all of the students may have access to a mobile device.
- During school hours, students could leave school buildings via exterior entries without permission.

Biometric devices

An advanced access control solution that provides high-level security, biometric devices require the user to provide their fingerprint or a retina scan to gain access to a secured space. Biometric devices can be found in government buildings, hospitals and airports where restricted spaces are common but there's an argument to be made that they can also be used in educational facilities.

Pros

- Often used alongside another form of access credentials, such as mobile access or key cards, as a form of two-factor authentication.
- Provides a high level of security as everyone has a unique set of biometrics that are very difficult to replicate, fake or transfer.
- Fingerprint and retina scanners are quick and easy to use.
- Users wouldn't need to carry around anything, as they would have to for mobile access control and key card or fob solutions.

Cons

- An expensive solution to install and operate, especially for schools and colleges working with a tight budget.
- Concerns around data privacy and the handling of sensitive information would be something the school or university would have to take into account to adhere to applicable regulations.





School lockdown and door barricade devices

Door locks for school lockdowns

In worst-case scenarios, security personnel may have no other option but to initiate a school and classroom [door lockdown](#) across a school building or college campus, so it is vital that educational facilities have a comprehensive lockdown plan in place.

In fact, in 2019-20, 96% of all public K-12 schools had a written plan describing procedures to be performed in an emergency situation, and 98% had conducted a lockdown drill with their students that year, according to the [National Center for Education Statistics](#).

A key element of a thorough and reliable lockdown plan is the type of school lockdown door locks used. To choose the ideal safety locks for inside doors and exterior access points, you need to choose the right lockdown system option for your school or college. There are two types of lockdowns for schools and classroom doors:

Global Lockdown - this system option locks all doors from one location. This procedure is usually carried out through the school's access control system.

Local Lockdown - this system option locks individual classroom doors from the inside. This gives the teacher or staff member in the classroom the decision as to whether to evacuate or lock their classroom door.

Choosing the right option for your school or college depends on the application. Security professionals and emergency responders will usually suggest a mix of the two lockdown options. Put simply, the Global Lockdown system option can be adopted along the perimeter of a school building and the Local Lockdown can be adopted for interior use, for example, a classroom door lockdown.

School door barricade devices

School door barricade systems and devices or school door barricade locks are designed to wedge or barricade doors and provide classroom door protection from the inside during an emergency or lockdown scenario to stop intruders from entering a space such as a classroom.

However, these secondary classroom door lockdown devices can have the reverse intended effect and prove dangerous in emergency situations.

In a recent article, the [Security Industry Association \(SIA\)](#) outlined its concerns about these school lockdown door barricade devices. The SIA identified three key areas of concern:

- Such devices could prevent both escape and intervention from first responders.
- Many of these classroom door barricade devices and classroom door stoppers do not meet fire code requirements and violate accessibility requirements under the Americans With Disabilities Act.
- Most of the classroom security locks on the market already provide lockdown capabilities that would keep students, staff and visitors safe. In fact, in numerous documented cases in the United States, there have been no situations where an intruder has bodily breached a locked classroom door.



Key questions to consider when choosing the right school door lock system

Now that you're aware of the various school door locks and devices, take into account the following questions in order to determine what type of school safety door locks and classroom security locks suit your school or college campus.

Who will be using the lock?

If the door lock for [school safety](#) needs to be operated by students, school staff and visitors, keep in mind that this will impact your decision on the choice of locks and devices, as you'll need to take into account the number of users, when they will need access and how your team will be able to handle school door lock operation.

How often will the lock be used?

Locks that are used frequently will experience more wear so it's important to ensure that robust school security door locks are installed on doors that see a lot of use.

Can school exterior and classroom door locks be operated quickly in an emergency?

In a lockdown situation or another emergency scenario, it is vital that your emergency door locks for school can be operated quickly to secure students and staff.

Is it necessary to have doors lock automatically?

If yes, it is crucial that you explore electronic locks that contain a spring-loaded mortise latch.

Would you like a hold-open feature?

The hold-open feature allows security teams to open up access to classrooms, gym halls, libraries and other school areas during school hours or during a school-wide event, such as an open day. Outside of these specific hours, the school security door lock can restrict access.

Does your lock system require a tamper-proof feature?

This feature provides extra protection against those who are trying to intrude upon a restricted area. It typically kicks in after multiple failed attempts to gain access, for example, via a keypad, and automatically shuts down the device to prevent further attempts.

Will your school door lock system need to integrate with your existing access control system?

If so, it is essential that you discuss which school door lock systems have the capability to integrate with your current access control system. For example, Motorola Solutions Access Control Manager integrates with leading lock providers, including ASSA ABLOY, Allegion and SALTO.

What is your budget for procuring new emergency classroom door locks for school safety?

This will have the biggest impact on the choice of door lock for school safety you opt for. Be sure to work out the total cost of procuring door locks for your school or college building and remember to keep in mind potential costs associated with integrating the lock system with other [school security systems](#), as well as maintenance and upkeep over time.





What can school security cameras do for your campus or classroom?

For school administrators and security teams, enhanced situational awareness is vital to helping ensure the safety and security of education facilities. Security cameras for schools, or CCTV cameras for schools, can help administrators and security teams achieve this.

Therefore, it's not a surprise that between 2009–10 to 2019–20, the percentage of public schools reporting the use of CCTV cameras in schools grew from 61% to 91%, according to the [National Center for Education Statistics](#). With this technology, schools and college campuses can:

Detect unfolding incidents and emergencies

Installing school security cameras at strategic locations will provide maximum awareness. Key areas include security cameras in school classrooms, libraries, entrances, hallways, stairwells, parking lots and faculty rooms.

This gives school security camera system operators better visibility over areas where incidents and emergencies are most likely, enabling improved focus and faster response. From detecting escalating tensions within a group of students to spotting a potential fire hazard, security cameras in schools, including security cameras in classrooms, can provide users with a view of what's happening without being there physically.

Deter bad behavior and illegal activities

The simple presence of security cameras in school classrooms, hallways, cafeterias, and outdoor grounds has proven to deter bad student behavior and criminal activities, whether that be bullying, theft or vandalism.

According to [Campus Safety Magazine](#), nearly one in three respondents to their 2020 survey (31%) stated that their school security camera systems frequently prevent crime.

Capture evidentiary footage

In the event of an incident, school CCTV cameras can capture school security camera footage that can be used for evidentiary purposes by the administrators, school security team or local law enforcement.

School security camera system footage of incidents and emergencies can also be used to better train individuals and teams to ensure there's no repeat of the incident and improve future response efforts.



Enhance awareness in schools with video analytics

In recent years, security camera technology has taken great strides to provide further features that can support the operator in enhancing the safety and security of their facilities, with video analytics being one of the most important advancements.

Video analytics for education and schools can extend the security team's capabilities by automatically alerting operators of potential incidents within their facility, allowing them to respond in real-time to events. These analytics include:

Detect unusual motion

Unusual motion technology within school security cameras learn what a typical scene looks like. It then detects and flags unusual motion that deviates from the norm to the operator via the video management system (VMS). An example of this could be the movement of an intruder on school property outside of school hours in a school security camera scene.

Detect unusual activity

Unusual activity technology detects atypical activities within a camera scene and alerts operators. An example of this type of video analytics for schools and educational facilities in action could be a speeding vehicle in the campus parking lot or an individual climbing the school's perimeter fence.

Read vehicular information

This type of video analytics automatically reads vehicular information and links it to live and recorded video. In the event of an incident involving a vehicle, security operators can search for this vehicle's information and quickly find school security camera footage relating to it for verification and investigation. On some advanced school security camera systems, operators can be alerted to banned vehicles entering their grounds.



Benefits of using security cameras and CCTV in schools

Increased situational awareness and faster incident response

Cameras for schools, including security cameras in classrooms, help provide the security team with a view of the activities taking place within their educational facilities. Without having to physically be there, the school security camera system operator can detect when a potential incident may be unfolding and provide vital information to the security team for an informed response.

With video analytics-enabled security cameras in a school, the operator can be automatically alerted to an incident allowing for faster incident response.

Improved student behavior

The presence of school cameras has been proven to improve the behavior of students on school property. With security cameras for schools installed, students think twice before bullying their peers, instigating arguments or fights and damaging school property as well as other activities.

Deter criminal activities

According to the [National Center for Education Statistics](#), during the 2019–20 school year, 77% of public schools recorded that one or more incidents of crime had taken place. This amounts to 1.4 million incidents across U.S. public schools. Deterring crime should therefore be a key focus for school administrators and this is where CCTV for schools comes in.

As pointed out earlier in this guide, CCTV cameras in schools, as well as cameras located along the school perimeter, can prove to be a strong visual deterrent for crime. Well-placed school security cameras help prevent theft, vandalism, antisocial behavior or other illegal activities as people know their activities and identity could be captured in live and recorded footage.

Capture evidentiary footage

With school cameras installed at strategic checkpoints, whether that's along the perimeter line, in the parking lot or along a hallway in a faculty building, footage of incidents and emergencies can be captured and stored within the school security camera system.

This footage from security cameras in school can then be assessed to analyze what happened, identify the perpetrators involved and recreate the timeline of events. This can prove to be crucial in solving investigations both for the school security team and, if applicable, local law enforcement.

School security camera footage can also be used for training purposes, especially when it comes to emergency preparedness and incident response workflows.

Provides visual verification for access activities

The best security cameras for school integrate with existing access control systems to provide enhanced security. As a result, the security team can view real-time footage from security cameras in school to assess if the individual requesting access is authorized to enter the facility and is not an intruder using someone else's access credentials fraudulently. All access activity and linked school CCTV footage are recorded on the activity log for reporting and investigatory purposes.



The best types of security cameras for schools and K-12 campuses

School perimeter, parking lots and sports fields

Monitoring outdoor environments, such as the school boundary line, parking lots and sports fields, can be quite a challenge.

Low-lighting, crowds and vast spaces are just a few of the things that make monitoring these sites difficult for security. Therefore, it is essential that the school or college campus CCTV cameras installed in these locations address these challenges and make the duties of the school camera operators simpler.

The recommendation for [parking lot cameras](#) or perimeter cameras are the pan-tilt-zoom (PTZ) school camera, the bullet school camera and the license plate capture school camera.



PTZ school cameras

- Provides wide-area coverage with up to 360° views and long-range detail thanks to its powerful zoom capabilities.
- PTZ security cameras for schools are capable of handling a variety of outdoor conditions as well as being resistant to impact levels and vandalism.
- The best PTZ security cameras for schools have built-in AI-powered video analytics that detects unusual activity, such as intruders or vandals, even in crowds.
- Detect suspects and vehicles in variable lighting conditions, including darkness.



Bullet school cameras

- Good zoom capabilities allow operators to monitor incidents with clarity.
- Some bullet security cameras for schools possess built-in AI-powered video analytics that detects unusual activity and motion.
- The best bullet security cameras for schools can handle a variety of outdoor conditions and provide good imaging performance in low-light situations.



License plate capture school cameras

- Ideal for securing parking lots, as well as drop-off or pick-up zones.
- This camera type is capable of capturing vehicular information that helps to notify operators whether the vehicle is authorized to enter the parking lot.
- The best license plate capture security cameras for schools are also capable of capturing vehicular information at high speeds, in low-light conditions and in inclement weather.





School exit and entry spaces

Exit and entry spaces see a lot of traffic from students, staff and visitors, and distinguishing between those that are authorized to enter and exit from those who are intruding is no easy feat.

These spaces are also likely to experience variable lighting, such as bright sunlight, which can affect the imagery obtained by the school security cameras and make viewing live school security camera footage difficult.

The best security cameras for school exits and entries would be a video intercom system paired with a dome or bullet security camera for schools. With this combination, operators can benefit from multiple viewing angles and utilize the intercom to verify visitors, helping to keep facilities secure.



Video intercom system

- Combines video security and access control so operators can utilize the video and audio feed when managing access events to support verification.
- Built-in audio capabilities enable operators to activate audio talk down, helping to deter incidents.
- Advanced video intercom systems are built with video analytics, which helps to establish the person's credentials, as well as a wide dynamic range, which enables the camera to capture detail in dynamic lighting.

Dome or Bullet school cameras

- In case of an attempted intrusion, the dome and bullet security cameras in the school can capture clear video of the incident, helping to guide the response.
- The latest dome and bullet security cameras in school have built-in AI-powered video analytic capabilities which allow the operator to discover unusual activity and motion.
- These school security cameras deliver good imaging performance in variable lighting thanks to their wide dynamic range feature.



School hallways, classrooms, cafeterias and other indoor spaces

Hallways, cafeterias and libraries, along with classrooms and lecture halls, are busy areas within a school. With individuals constantly on the move and spaces such as these being both small and large, the best security cameras in school classrooms and other indoor spaces need to be versatile.

At the same time, these cameras should not be obtrusive to the point where they make students, staff and visitors uncomfortable. While cameras in classrooms may have pros and cons, it is still important that security teams have awareness of what is happening in them in order to identify threats or potential incidents.

There are a few camera types best suited to perform the requirements of effective video cameras in classrooms and other indoor environments such as the fisheye, multi-directional and corner school security cameras.



Fisheye school cameras

The best fisheye security cameras for schools provide 360° panoramic views from a single vantage point, bringing superior situational awareness without any blind spots.

Sleek and low-profile design means these school security cameras are unobtrusive. For example, the [Avigilon Fisheye camera](#) also comes with an in-ceiling mount and a paintable front plate to help the camera blend in with its surroundings.

These security cameras in school classrooms and other indoor spaces can detect critical events with built-in video analytics, even in crowded spaces.



Multi-directional school cameras

This security camera in school buildings, depending on the number of lens modules, can provide up to 360° views and broad area coverage.

Fewer school security cameras need to be procured and installed as multi-directional cameras, can provide wide-area coverage, which lowers investment costs for schools on tight budgets.

Recognize potentially critical events to help you act faster with built-in analytics.



Corner school cameras

- The best corner security cameras for schools are built to withstand attempts to vandalize and destroy it with their impact-resistant nature.
- The corner camera's wide field of view can provide optimal situational awareness along hallways, lobby areas and interior building corners.
- As with the other cameras, the best corner security cameras for schools possess video analytics that can further enhance situational awareness and instantly alert operators to developing incidents.



The importance of effective video management software

Of equal importance to selecting the right type of security cameras in school, classrooms and campus sites is choosing the right video management software (VMS) to accompany your video security setup.

VMS enables video security operators to record, view, save and export school security camera footage that is captured from the security cameras in the school. From identifying the right VMS features your security team needs to ensuring the software can integrate with your existing school security camera system and other solutions, procuring the right VMS can make a real difference in how effectively safety is delivered.

What to look for in an effective VMS

Ease of use

Nothing makes the job of a video security operator more frustrating than having to deal with a VMS that is complicated and not user-friendly. VMS should be easy to use so that even inexperienced security professionals can get onboarded quickly without much training. This particular benefit makes all the difference when it comes to dealing with an emergency, where a quick response from the operator is essential to avoiding a negative outcome.

Scalability

It's important to invest in a VMS that allows your security team to scale the school security camera system in the event that more school cameras are installed and further users need to be given software access.

Search and export capabilities

Features that will allow the user to search for specific school security camera footage, or for specific objects of interest, can expedite the response and investigative process. Once the required footage is found, the clip may need to be passed onto another department or local law enforcement as evidence. Therefore, it is essential that the VMS allows the user to export the footage safely and efficiently.

Integration capabilities

By integrating your existing CCTV in schools with the VMS, you are helping to improve efficiency and enhance safety, as operators will be able to view and manage school

CCTV footage from their VMS. Aside from the [school security camera system](#), if the VMS integrates with other security solutions, such as a school security alarm system and access control technologies, users can utilize one centralized platform to monitor all the different solutions, leading to improved efficiency.

Cloud-capable

According to a 2020 study in [Campus Safety Magazine](#), only 31% of all respondents stated that they are using cloud technology to deliver video security management to remotely monitor events at their school.

By utilizing a cloud-capable VMS, school security teams can take advantage of its flexible nature by accessing security camera footage at any time, from anywhere. This means your security operators can monitor events using the [cloud security cameras](#) in school without having to be restricted to the control room.

Schools and colleges can also scale their school security camera system easily while saving on hardware costs that would be associated with an on-premise solution.

Compliance with policies

It's vital that the VMS complies with local laws in order to protect the privacy of students, staff and visitors. Ensuring that the [school safety software](#) has strong resistance to hacking attempts, follows specific footage retention policies and provides a secure process to sharing sensitive information can help to strengthen security posturing, as well as make the job of the video security team simpler.



The benefits of an integrated security system for schools

Connecting the different components of school security solutions can create a stronger, more holistic system. When choosing campus security systems, look for school security companies that offer seamless integration between locks, access control, cameras, and alarms for the highest level of protection and efficiency.

Use case: Integrated alarm systems and school security solutions

An example of the effective use of an alarm system for schools integrated with other school security solutions is when dealing with vaping incidents.

With the recent surge in teenage vaping, especially among high school students, educational facilities need to be aware of students bringing vaping devices with them to school and using them.

In a recent study, teachers expressed concern about vaping in schools, reporting incidents of students vaping that led to classroom disruptions. By installing vape detectors that are integrated with the alarms in the school's security system, the on-site team can be alerted to vaping events instantly, allowing them to respond appropriately. With this school alarm system, vaping incidents at high schools can be cut down significantly.

Use case: School security solutions for bike thefts

Unfortunately, bike thefts are becoming more common on school campuses, with a recent study from England stating that on average there is one bike theft recorded for every 66 students, and 96% of cases either resulted in no suspect being identified or had no outcome.

As part of a security system for schools and colleges, installing video security cameras integrated with the school alarm system at strategic points near a bike shed may help limit theft.

By capturing the entire scene, bike theft incidents can be recorded as well as brought to the attention of the security

team as they are occurring. The bike alarm system for schools could then sound to deter the thief, and the recorded footage can assist in identifying and locating the suspect if they're still on campus.

With the help of AI video analytics, such as Avigilon Appearance Search™ technology, the school security solution could also alert authorities if the suspect returns to campus.

Use case: School lockdown procedure

In rare situations, a school or campus lockdown may be necessary to ensure safety. Effective [lockdown procedures for schools](#) can be carried out by a responsive access control system - one that also integrates with a school alarm system, cameras and sensors to create a powerful school security solution.

For example, if an intruder is able to force entry through the entrance doors and access an elementary school, the door security alarms will send an alert via the school's access control system and notify security that an unauthorized individual has gained access. A cloud-based lockdown activation, offered by school security companies like Avigilon, lets administrators trigger a custom lockdown plan from anywhere, ensuring classrooms and other secure areas remain inaccessible to the intruder.

With an integrated video security system, the operator can also locate and track the intruder's whereabouts in order to respond quickly and decisively.

If such a situation occurred at a sprawling college campus, the security team could respond differently by initiating a lockdown at the specific site of the intrusion only. As a result, the disruption would not be seen campus-wide.





Cybersecurity for school security systems

There's never been a better time to ensure schools and colleges are adopting best practices and implementing solutions designed to protect confidential information. The focus must turn to establishing strong cybersecurity resilience as part of a security system for schools and campuses by:

- Carrying out an audit of the facility's network and cybersecurity systems and ensuring this occurs frequently so weaknesses can be addressed.
- Ensuring all staff have been cybersecurity trained and students are educated on the best practices for avoiding being the target of a cyber attack.
- Limiting who has access to networks and establishing strong firewalls in order to suppress any unauthorized activities.
- Restricting physical access to data rooms and IT infrastructure with the help of an advanced access control system.
- Backing up school data systems routinely and in accordance with regulations.
- Developing a thorough cybersecurity attack response procedure.

Security management platforms

With many standalone security systems for schools and universities, it is important that these systems are handled efficiently. By implementing a security management platform, teams can centralize the maintenance, operational state and scaling of the school alarm system, access control and video security.

By centralizing all these systems on one platform, teams can reduce workload, improve productivity and ensure their school and campus security systems are optimized and operational.

Reimagining school safety

As schools and college campuses continue to adopt a variety of security solutions - from video security and [school door locks](#) to radio communications and resource mapping software - it is important that security teams and administrators are able to easily and effectively manage all of them.

When choosing security technology companies for your school, it's important to consider whether investing in separate systems or using an all-in-one solution is a better fit for your facilities.

A complete solution, like the [Safe Schools technology ecosystem](#) from Motorola Solutions, offers a unified and connected management experience that integrates critical communications, video security, data and analytics on one platform. Technology ecosystems like this can provide educational facilities with the ability to:

1. Detect incidents with their school security camera system and access control solutions
2. Analyze events with analytics and resource mapping software
3. Communicate using radios
4. Respond to incidents and complete end-to-end incident reports

By unifying wider security platforms with the school security camera system, schools and campuses can detect, analyze, communicate and respond to events more effectively which helps to create safer schools that are conducive to learning.



Security systems for schools and colleges checklist

Now that you're familiar with the types of security systems for schools and campuses, use this checklist to help build a powerful, integrated security system that will help keep your school or college campus safe.

School alarm system

- Ensure your school alarm system adheres to building codes with reliable smoke and fire alarm systems for schools as well as a school alarm system for natural disasters.
- Adopt an integrated alarm system as part of your security system for school - one that works seamlessly with door security alarms, access control and video security systems.
- Take into account the size of your elementary school or high school - is it a single-building or multi-building site, how many floors are there, what indoor and outdoor areas need to be secured, and where is the security office located in proximity to the high-traffic areas?

Security camera system for schools

- Identify the areas of your school that require a video security solution.
- Select the best camera type for each site in your school that requires a security camera.
- Confirm your video security cameras and VMS integrate with your access control and alarm systems.
- Additional considerations for campus security solutions

School access control and door lock system

- Research the different types of access control solutions. Does an on-premise system suit your school best or a cloud-based mobile solution? Does it integrate with other elements that fall within your school security systems?
- Identify school security checkpoints that require access control and door locks. This goes beyond just installing such solutions at entrances and exits. Consider adding interior doors to offices, labs, and restricted areas to your school security system.
- When an intrusion is attempted and the security alarm for the door or the sensor alarm for the door is triggered, does the solution you're looking for include an automatic school lockdown procedure option?
- Ensure your school security solutions, door locks in particular, adhere to fire and safety regulations.

Flexible lockdown procedures

- Ensure your security alarm system is integrated with your access control system so that you can detect, verify and respond to any intrusion events instantly.
- Does your integrated campus security system allow you to initiate lockdown procedures at specific locations on your grounds in order to minimize disruption campus-wide?

Outdoor spaces and large events

- Identify areas within your campus ground, aside from learning environments, that require a robust campus security system. Do parking lots, pathways, sports fields and venues require security cameras to monitor events and controlled entry with smart access control solutions?
- During large-scale events, such as a game at your sports venue, will your campus security systems be able to handle the influx of people? Think about the strategic placement of security cameras so you can capture entire scenes, the use of AI analytics to identify any unusual events and the areas that require security checkpoints and access control.

Access control

- Confirm your campus security system is capable of granting access to authorized personnel 24/7. This may include students visiting the campus library, or staff accessing the parking lot late at night.
- How will you grant access to authorized visitors and vendors? Does your access control system allow you to easily provide access credentials both on-site and remotely? If so, is this in the form of a badge or mobile-based access?





How educational institutions leverage Avigilon solutions

Discover how the Avigilon security suite helps schools and campuses enhance safety, protect students and staff and optimize operations with advanced technology and actionable insights.

The University of Tennessee safeguards its campus with Avigilon

With over 27,500 students and a 550-acre campus, the University of Tennessee (UT) needed a robust video security solution to ensure safety during events, particularly at its football stadium. UT implemented the Avigilon security system to enable security personnel and law enforcement to observe campus security in real-time.

Avigilon cameras provide clear footage and act as a deterrent to potential troublemakers. Security teams can analyze live and recorded video using the Avigilon video management software for informed incident response. The system is scalable, ensuring its effectiveness as the university expands. On game days, Avigilon supports monitoring of up to 130,000 fans, strengthening safety before, during and after events.

“ The University of Tennessee is committed to keeping its campus safe and the Avigilon system is an important part of our security procedures and emergency management plan.

– Brian Browning, Director of Administrative and Support Services at University of Tennessee

[Read case study](#)





Dorchester County Public Schools builds comprehensive security with Avigilon

Responsible for nearly 5,000 students, Dorchester County Public Schools faced challenges from community issues that spilled into schools, including aggression, illegal substances and weapons. Without a weapons detection or access control system, incidents involving unauthorized entry posed risks.

Dorchester County Public Schools enhanced security by installing Avigilon's high-quality cameras and robust access control system and using Motorola Solutions radios to enable better observation and communication. This solution significantly reduced weapon-related incidents and improved overall school safety, addressing external and internal school challenges. As a result, the organization created a safer environment for students to learn and thrive.

[Read case study](#)

“With Motorola Solutions, all our security systems are seamlessly integrated. No other system has impressed me as much as Motorola Solutions.

– Mike Richardson, Director of Safety and Emergency Management at Dorchester County Public Schools





Special needs school One of the Kids enhances safety and flexibility with Avigilon

One of the Kids, a family-run clinic for children with disabilities, required a robust access control system. Chief Information Security Officer Anh Luong partnered with Security 101 to implement a solution that would allow staff easy access while preventing unauthorized entry. The system needed to be flexible enough to accommodate the clinic's ever-changing schedules and staff, allowing for instant adjustments to credentials and permissions.

Avigilon streamlined operations for One of the Kids with advanced technology, enabling efficient access management. Features like remote unlocking allow operators to grant after-hours access to staff and vendors without being on-site. The access management software simplifies the user database, making it easy to revoke credentials with a single action. With cloud-based accessibility, authorized users can manage the system from anywhere—updating credentials, running reports and ensuring seamless security adjustments as the clinic's needs evolve.

[Read case study](#)

“ We have peace of mind that the facility is always secure, while providing easy access for staff. That's the beauty of the cloud.”

– Anh Luong, Chief Information Security Officer at One of the Kids

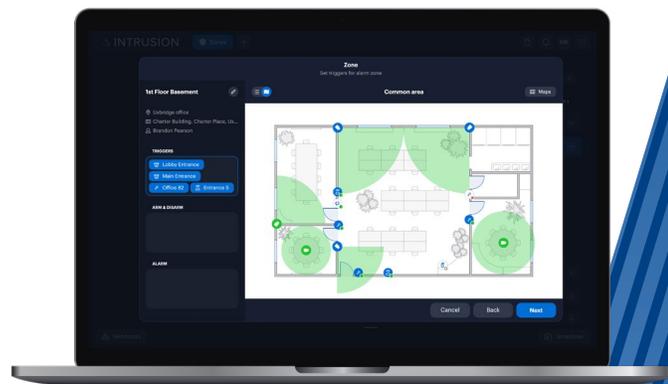


Essential Avigilon security solutions for schools

Protecting students, staff and school property requires advanced security technology. Avigilon's smart solutions provide enhanced visibility, access control and real-time threat detection, helping schools maintain a safe and secure learning environment. Here are essential Avigilon products that strengthen school security:

Intrusion detection system

The Intrusion detection system provides round-the-clock protection for school campuses by detecting unauthorized access and potential security threats in real time. It integrates seamlessly with access control and video security, allowing administrators to receive instant alerts, view intrusion events and take immediate action. Schools can customize detection zones, schedule arming/disarming and manage alarms remotely to ensure a proactive security approach.



[View product](#)

HALO Smart Sensor

The HALO Smart Sensor provides critical security insights in areas where cameras cannot be placed, such as restrooms and locker rooms. It detects vaping, smoke, air quality issues and elevated noise levels, sending real-time alerts to administrators to help ensure student safety. By implementing this smart sensor, schools can enhance security and proactively address potential safety risks, creating a safer learning environment.



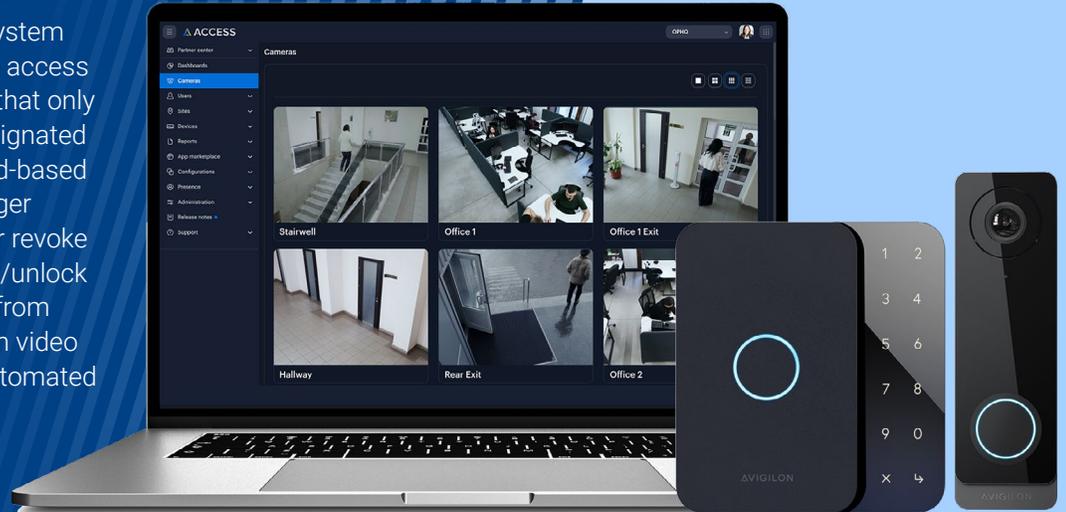
[View product](#)



Cloud access control system

The Avigilon cloud access control system provides secure, flexible and remote access management for schools, ensuring that only authorized individuals can enter designated areas. With mobile credentials, cloud-based administration and the ability to trigger lockdowns, school staff can grant or revoke access instantly, schedule door lock/unlock times and view real-time entry logs from anywhere. Seamless integration with video security enhances visibility, while automated alerts improve response times.

[View product](#)



Video management software with AI analytics

Avigilon's Video Management Software (VMS) enhances school security by providing AI-powered analytics that enable faster threat detection and incident response. With features like Appearance Search and Unusual Activity Detection, administrators can quickly locate individuals, follow movement across campus and identify potential security risks in real time. Additionally, the Lockdown feature allows staff to immediately secure doors and control access points during emergencies. Seamless integration with access control and intrusion detection ensures a comprehensive security solution, while remote access capabilities allow staff to view live feeds, review footage and receive instant alerts from any location.

[View product](#)



Stay ahead of threats with school security technology

As schools continue to face evolving security challenges, it's crucial to stay ahead of threats. Educational institutions must take proactive measures to protect students, staff and facilities.

To mitigate these risks, schools need a comprehensive security plan that integrates physical security solutions. The key to staying ahead is leveraging AI-powered technology and cloud-based systems that provide enhanced situational awareness, automate processes and allow for swift incident response. These technologies help security teams identify behavioral patterns, make informed decisions and better protect the campus.

Although adopting these advanced technologies may involve initial investment, the long-term benefits of keeping up with security trends—including improved safety, increased efficiency and stronger community trust—are invaluable. Investing in modern security systems ensures that schools can respond to emerging threats more proactively and efficiently.

Related resources

Explore additional materials to help enhance your school's security strategy and stay informed on the latest trends and solutions.

- [Campus access control systems guide](#)
- [How to stop vaping in schools](#)
- [Guide to securing grants for school vape detectors](#)
- [School violence prevention guide](#)
- [Guide to Safe Schools Week 2025](#)



Get **expert help** today



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