

## Making Lafayette Christian School Safer Every Day

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I improved my school's safety for the applied school project. Keeping all stakeholders safe is a top priority. My school is in an area that is transitioning from a small town to a more urban city. I have a safety committee that meets once a month and reports to my school board. The committee is made up of a police officer (also a board member), a firefighter, a tech expert, two teachers, and myself. In Indiana our department of education offers a safety specialist training. Public schools are required to have one safety specialist for the corporation. My school has three. Two teachers and I are trained safety specialists.

### I. What Did You Do?

Specifically, I will list and give an explanation of various safety improvements that were made for the applied school project. One major blessing was being awarded a \$6,000 Homeland Security Matching Safety Grant which was matched by donors for a total of \$12,000. The grant will enhance the safety/security of our school facility by undertaking the following physical improvements:

- Install an additional set of electronic access controlled doors at the main entrance.
- Upgrade and replace outdated door locks in the entire facility, and rekey the entire facility
- Install additional cameras/DVRs as needed to fill out the school surveillance system and increase recording capabilities

The following safety improvements were not covered in the grant, but the safety committee was able to do the following:

- New carpet in several parts of the building.
- Purchase/install identifying numbers and letters on the exterior of the school for each door/classroom.
- Install a card reader for door access at the glass door in the Brown Street lot.
- The school has entered into a contract to provide off-duty police officers for security at large events held at the school on an as needed basis.
- Re-writing and updating the comprehensive safety plan for Lafayette Christian School based on current best practices.
- Provided fire extinguisher and fire prevention training to the faculty with members of the Lafayette Fire Department.
- Added two "panic" buttons that when hit the police will be automatically notified and all exterior doors will lock instantaneously.
- Added new signage to the Drop-Off/Pick-Up lane to remind driver's never to use mobile devices while in the line with children so close.
- Committee has begun work to develop a Crisis Management/Response Team.

Prior to initiating all this, the safety committee conducted a needs assessment to determine what projects to move forward with as priorities. These priorities were identified by a walk around site security survey performed by the school safety committee.

### II. What Difference Is It Making In Your School?

School safety is making a huge difference in my school. The second set of doors will be an additional layer that a possible intruder has to go through in order to gain access to the school. Having the school rekeyed and a thorough, organized key system will allow for a peace of mind knowing who has keys for the school. When seconds count, having shatter resistant glass may make all the difference. The "panic" button is a great addition. If a crisis situation occurs, this button could make all the difference. If a potential perpetrator approaches an entrance and someone sees them, they could hit the panic button and lock all exterior doors simultaneously. With clear numbers on all doors, this will assist first responders in a crisis situation know where doors and windows are located. We had two off duty police officers at our daddy/daughter dance. One dad, who had a restraining order and was not allowed at school for awhile, came to the dance. The restraining order expired and so legally he could attend. Potential problems were negated due to the presence of the officers.