

Does Your School Have a Safety Plan?

**TOTAL
SECURITY
SOLUTIONS**

Before approaching your school district about implementing a bulletproof barrier, you should determine how this barrier will fit into your school district's overall security protocol. Start by asking if they've done a comprehensive security assessment, and have a documented school safety plan in place.

Most school safety plans include:

→ Training for staff and students

Comprehensive active-shooter response training for teachers and administrative staff, as well as lock-down drills for students.

→ Monitoring strategies

May include video surveillance systems, identification card readers, and school resource officers.

→ Safety culture programs

Campus safety programs to foster good communication, and encourage students and staff to embrace safety awareness.

→ Secured doors and entryways

Procedures to funnel all visitors to one secured and managed point of entry.

How to Make an Immediate Impact on School Safety

If your school doesn't already do so, you can **suggest taking the following actions to ensure safety for everyone:**

- Require everyone enter the building through one entrance
- Conduct regular lockdown training
- Add school resource officers
- Create reporting mechanisms to respond to suspicious behavior
- Discuss installing a bulletproof barrier

! Access control is key. A bulletproof barrier will not help if your school allows open access from various points of entry.

! Bulletproof glass is very heavy. If you retrofit a barrier into an existing space, you need to be sure that the structure can support this extra weight.

The Six Steps to a Successful Bulletproof Barrier Installation

STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4	STEP 5	STEP 6
Research/Bidding Districts research, look online and speak to other schools that have installed bulletproof barriers. They then get multiple bids before hiring a vendor.	Selection Your school will award the job of designing, fabricating and installing their ballistic barrier to the vendor and set a deadline for installation.	Plan Your vendor should plan every component using exact field measurements, and consider daily operations at your school.	Design Your vendor should work closely with an architect or school safety official to ensure that the barrier is customized properly for the location.	Production Typical production time for a bullet resistant barrier system for a school is 4-8 weeks , depending on the type of glazing and bulletproof glass needed.	Installation Most schools install their barriers over the summer, and it can be done as quickly as overnight.

! Costs for a barrier system can run upwards of \$25,000 per barrier, and vary depending on materials used.

! Your school should start planning in February for a summer installation

5 Questions Parents Should Ask About School Security

Schools aren't as safe as they once were. The National Crime Prevention Council says that "[o]verall, schools are one of the safest places children can be," but with incidents of school shootings still making headlines, it's understandable that parents are concerned. Schools are taking action.

Public and private schools in the U.S. take the threat of school violence very seriously hiring school resource officers to keep both students and staff safe in school, installing bullet resistant barriers in schools, and training both students and staff members on procedures to follow should an active shooter situation arise in, around or near their school.

Know What Safety Measures and Training Your School Offers

We recommend each parent find out the answers to the following questions. Talk to your school's or school district's administrators and school board to learn how they're preparing for an emergency.

Has the school/district implemented ALICE Training?

ALICE is a program recognized nationwide by schools and universities for its exceptional training in how to respond in an active shooter situation. The term ALICE stands for Alert, Lock-down, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate, yet schools love it because it offers administrators, staff and students more than the traditional "lock down"-only approach and looks to actively counter the threat as it unfolds.

This school active shooter plan has been embraced by more than 3,700 K-12 schools, 900 universities, and 3,280 Police/LE departments nationwide.

Does your child's school have a school resource or security officer?

The National Center for Education Statistics reported in 2015 that 43 percent of all public schools in the country employed a school resource officer in the 2013-2014 school year, with more than 46,000 full-time and 36,000 part-time officers on duty. High schools and middle schools have been in the vanguard when it comes to hiring resource officers, but elementary schools are enlisting these safety officers, as well.

While many schools use these officers for D.A.R.E. programs or to be a friendly ear for children share their troubles, many of these law enforcement officers are trained in ALICE techniques and school emergency plans

What protocols does your school have for checking children and visitors in and out of school buildings?

It's wise if all visitors – including parent volunteers – produce identification when they come to volunteer or pick up children for appointments. The school also should ask all parents at the beginning of the school year to list those adults (grandparents, aunts, close friends) whom the parent designates as OK to pick up the child in the parent's absence.

These individuals also must present identification. All visitors also should wear a visitor badge while they are in the school's building(s).

Visitors also must be required to sign out when they leave the school. This way there's a record of when they signed in as well as when they left, **providing two up-front benefits:**

1. It could help administration know if someone is still in the building after hours.
2. Such documentation could help investigators put together a timeline in case of an incident.

What types of barriers does the school have in place?

The U.S. Department of Homeland security recommends that all schools manage the access visitors have to a school. Even if such barriers slow an active shooter down by just 20 seconds, school and city/regional law enforcement organizations should be able to mitigate or even neutralize the threat, especially if the barrier prevents the shooter from gaining access to the school's building.

Barrier-free bullet resistant barriers could well be the answer, especially if they meet school fire/safety and ADA requirements. Such barriers also could help keep rowdy students from causing trouble, keep vandals off the premises, and also slow down an active shooter's entry into a school.

Do administrators know about these specific school safety strategies?

Michael Dorn, the current executive director of Safe Havens International and a former school system police chief and university police lieutenant, discusses 20 prevention strategies in a September article on Campus Safety Magazine. Consider investing the time to read this article and talk to your school's administrators and school board members.

Specific tactics include:

- Training school personnel in how to recognize the different physical behaviors people who are carrying a concealed weapon may exhibit.
- Training staff in pattern matching and recognition. Doing so helps them spot behavior "incongruent for the time, setting and context" of a situation, helping staff possibly spot people who are potential dangers.
- Asking the school to set up a 24-hour anonymous tip line (phone and texting). Such tip lines have helped to prevent "numerous planned campus shootings, suicides and other deadly situations" since 1990.
- Having the school district's police department monitor social media, not only of current students' postings, but former students and even former employees. Dorn acknowledges monitoring social media can be challenging (too many students), but he mentions that "considerable efforts" are underway in the creation of "effective and practical software solutions."

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What experience do you have with schools?

Since 2004, TSS has provided bullet resistant barrier products to **thousands of schools, universities, and learning centers** across the country. In most cases, barriers are installed by a TSS installation team.

2. How do I get a bulletproof barrier in my school?

This is generally how a bulletproof barrier goes from inception to installation in a school:

District researches multiple vendors > those vendors bid for the job > the school awards the contract
> a barrier is then planned, designed, produced and installed

3. How much does a bullet proof barrier cost?

Costs for a bulletproof barrier system can range from **\$5,000 for a small transaction window to upwards of \$25,000 for a full system** that includes ballistic doors and hardware, bullet resistant framing, and fiberglass reinforcement of walls and counters.

4. Do you produce bulletproof items such as backpacks and clothing?

No. TSS specializes in customized, complex bulletproof barrier systems and their components. We do not produce personal items like vests, clothing, backpacks or whiteboards.

5. Do bulletproof barrier systems deter school shootings?

Yes. From thousands of installations nationwide, TSS has found that **the primary value of any bullet resistant system, in any type of environment, is deterrence.**

6. What level of bulletproof glass do most schools use?

Most schools utilize **UL-Level 1-3** bulletproof glass.

7. How long does it take to get a bulletproof barrier installed in a school?

Typical production time for a bullet resistant barrier system for a school is **6-8 weeks** (from the time drawings are approved) depending on the type of glazing and bulletproof components specified.

8. Besides the entryway, should we secure other areas with bulletproof glass?

Replacing every window in the school is not an economically viable option -- that could cost upwards of one million dollars. Instead, look into securing windows on upper floors with security film, and focus on replacing only the first floor windows with bulletproof glass (you could also invest in bulletproof glass for your front office).

9. When does it make sense to install a bulletproof barrier system?

If your school has a comprehensive safety plan in place - one that includes staff and student training, solid access control, a mechanism for reporting suspicious behavior, and secured doors and entryways - it might be time to discuss enhanced physical security features like ballistic doors, windows and countertops. Keep in mind that a bullet-resistant barrier is only one small component of effective school security.

10. Who should install the bulletproof barrier?

You should enlist the help of a professional bulletproof installation company to install your barrier. Ballistic materials are extremely heavy, and easily damaged by mishandling. Look for a vendor with high customer service ratings, and a solid track record of experience retrofitting barriers in school buildings.