

School Safety and Preparedness—What to Know

by Brooke Orner, ISBA Coordinator of Conferences (borner@isba-ind.org)

As the nation reels from yet another horrific school shooting, ISBA wants to ensure that our members feel prepared in the event that such a tragedy befalls their own school corporation. While school safety measures will not stop all incidents, they are still important to have in place. According to the National School Boards Association:

- 98% of public schools require visitors to sign in
- 90% have a closed campus policy
- 55% use video surveillance
- 43% have an electronic notification system for school-wide emergencies

The Indiana State Board of Education requires each school corporation to have an

up-to-date emergency preparedness plan in place within 60 days of the beginning date of each school year (511 IAC 6.1-2-2.5). The plan must include provisions on protecting staff and students in cases of manmade occurrences, such as student disturbances, weapons, hostage and kidnapping incidents. Now would be an appropriate time to review those emergency preparedness plans.

A county school safety commission is a great resource for school corporations to use to enlist input and support from multiple agencies and jurisdictions. These commissions include the school safety specialists from each school corporation in the county, a sheriff of the county, a judge of the juvenile court, an Indiana State Police officer, and others. Commissions provide an analysis of school safety needs within the county, methods to improve security, and emergency preparedness, along with

discussion about assessment of children who are at high-risk of becoming juvenile offenders.

While we know that emotions run high after events such as these, we want to encourage board members to support their superintendent, school safety specialist, and other building-level administrators. There is not a one-size-fits-all plan for preventing school shootings, and each school's preparedness plans will differ. However, leaning on and learning from neighboring schools could be potentially beneficial in updating or changing your school's plans. As always, please feel free to call on ISBA for any guidance you may need.

IDOE has cultivated an extensive collection of resources aimed at School Safety Specialists. You can find it [HERE](#)

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