

The LearnSafe[®] Initiative

Total School Safety and Security Management Program

“Because no teacher or child should have to attend school in fear”

September 2008



Executive Summary

Today's schools face unprecedented challenges. Never before have students, teachers, staff and administrators faced such danger in the places once thought to be the safest – our schools. Universities, High schools, elementary schools, and even small rural schoolhouses have become the backdrops of horrific violence – proving that no community in America is immune to this danger. On a more widespread scale, nearly every school campus must contend with less tragic, yet disruptive incidents of vandalism, trespassing, theft, assaults and truancy.

Districts are forced to plan for and respond to these challenges despite limited personnel and financial resources. How do you reduce teaching hours and absenteeism lost to bullying, intimidation, fear and security incidents? How do you increase safety and security without adding staff? And how do you identify warning signs to prevent incidents of violence?

Our nation's school districts need non-intrusive, affordable approaches to school security that proactively address violence and disruptive behavior before they occur. Additionally, the security approach must be comprehensive enough to allow district officials and local first responders to effectively manage the incident as it happens and communicate clearly with parents and the media after it ends.

The LearnSafe® Initiative is the only national school security initiative that targets every layer of safety and security on school campuses: assessment, prevention, detection and response, and training and coordination. Created in conjunction with state legislators, former federal and state law enforcement officials, prosecutors, school psychologists, school administrators, faculty, and former members of the U.S. military's Special Forces, LearnSafe provides a turn-key program customized for each school or campus in a district. Additionally, LearnSafe offers funding and financing programs tailored to the unique needs of each district. This will enable schools to effectively minimize risk on their campuses, maintain compliance with state and federal security mandates, and at the same time keep the burden on the taxpayer or endowment to a minimum.

Increasing School Violence

Recently major incidents of school violence have rocked communities and made headlines nationwide:

“31 dead in university shooting” (Virginia)

“Gunman reportedly bent on 'revenge' kills girls, self at Amish school” (Pennsylvania)

“Gunman and girl dead after Bailey hostage situation” (Colorado)

“2 killed, 3 injured in Essex shootings” (Vermont)

Every day, countless smaller incidents of violence, bullying, and disruptive behavior occur in schools. A recent report released by the U.S. Dept. of Education revealed startling statistics:

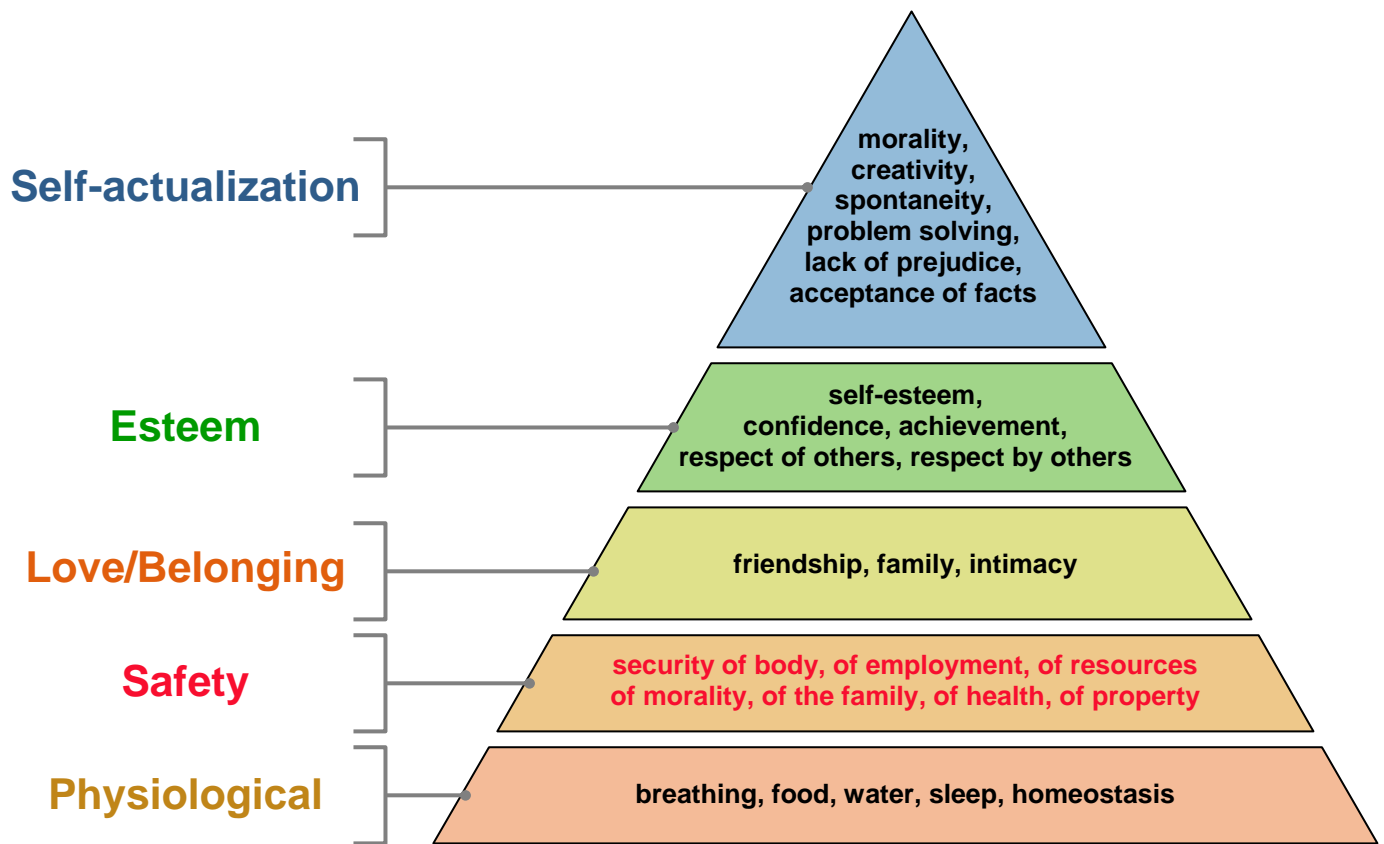
- 17 percent of students surveyed by the Centers for Disease Control have carried a weapon.
- 1.3 million students reported that they were threatened or injured with a weapon on school property within the past 12 months.
- 33 percent of students have been in a physical altercation.

- 74 percent of primary schools, 94 percent of middle schools, and 96 percent of high schools experienced violent crime at school during the 2003-2004 school year.
- 27 percent of high schools surveyed reported serious violent crimes (defined as rape, sexual battery, physical attack with a weapon, or robbery with or without a weapon) during the same time period.

School districts must take steps to decrease or eliminate the threats that students, faculty, staff and administrators face, and provide an environment where everyone in the school community can focus on education.

Safety: A Basic Human Need

Before a district can truly foster and maintain a safe learning and teaching environment, the basic human needs of teachers, students, and staff must be met. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Figure 1, below) ranks safety as the second most fundamental requirement above physiological needs like breathing, food, water and sleep. We must feel safe physically, emotionally, financially and psychologically before we can effectively experience higher-level human needs like love/belonging, esteem and self-actualization. By fortifying safety and security in the school environment, everyone is free to reach his/her maximum potential.



Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Administrative Challenges to Increased Security

As administrators look to improve the safety and security of their schools, they must contend with a number of issues and challenges:

Prevention – Prevention is critical, but prevention requires a district’s teachers and staff to be able to recognize behavioral issues and take steps to manage those issues with effective techniques. LearnSafe’s balanced approach integrates training with technology to proactively address potential threats before they manifest themselves. Technology is crucial, but it is ultimately a district’s staff, and not necessarily its technology, that will foster and maintain a safe school climate.

Compliance with unfunded state mandates – Though requirements vary by state, school districts are increasingly required to comply with state legislation or executive orders that mandate changes to school security programs. The LearnSafe initiative was designed to be compliant with requirements set forth by the National Incident Management System (NIMS), school security assessment standards in all 50 states, and federal legislation such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB), Jessica’s Law, the Cleary Act, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Limited personnel – With all faculty and staff pushed to capacity, there’s no room to dedicate additional human resources to safety and security. A district must “train to retain” so that resources can be deployed effectively and efficiently. Currently, a district’s existing security staff must focus on day-to-day issues, leaving little time to address big-picture prevention and crisis management planning.

Limited financial resources – In the school environment, the bulk of the budget goes toward teaching, leaving little for non-teaching needs such as safety and security. The challenge, then, is increasing security without adding staff. Every school has different needs, but in most cases LearnSafe specialists can find immediate funding vehicles that cover between 75% and 100% of the program without having to go to outside sources that can raise taxpayer burden and take months to qualify for approval.

Risk/liability management – More incidents of violence, vandalism and other crimes increase insurance claims, and in turn, premiums. They also elevate a district’s risk of lawsuits. With a strong security program in place, the many costs and liabilities associated with incidents go down.

A Picture of Comprehensive School Security

School security requires a comprehensive approach, from prevention to coordination with local entities during and after incidents, and from physical threats to cyber security. A “layered security” approach addresses every level and phase of security needs:

1. District wide risk assessment
2. Multi-level background checks
3. Behavioral intervention programs
4. Emergency management planning
5. Crisis communications training

6. Complete security monitoring and maintenance
7. Actionable video surveillance
8. Integrated access control and school lockdown
9. Visitor and vendor management
10. Coordination with state and local authorities

The LearnSafe® Initiative

LearnSafe was created in 2006 in response to an alarming increase in violence and employee misconduct in our nation's schools. The imperative was simple: provide our nation's children and teachers with the ability to learn and teach in a safe environment. An innovative new program, the LearnSafe® Initiative provides the tools and training to dramatically decrease the risk of violence that kids face daily. While we can't prevent every crime, we can certainly make it more difficult for these crimes to take place.

The LearnSafe® Initiative combines a security curriculum, continuing education programs, and a robust suite of technology and security services. The goal is simple: to help administrators, teachers, students, and parents deal with school safety and security issues to foster a safe environment in which children can learn without fear.

There are several organizations in the market today that provide bundled security services for schools; however, the LearnSafe® Initiative sets itself apart from other programs in the following fundamental ways:

Straightforward purchasing through TCPN – Unlike most security solutions providers, LearnSafe makes the purchasing process more efficient and economical for school district and government personnel. LearnSafe encourages purchase through The Cooperative Purchasing Network (TCPN), where LearnSafe products and services were awarded a competitively bid contract, #R4795.

By purchasing through TCPN, all government entities that must comply with state purchasing regulations (public and private schools, universities, municipalities and counties) are freed from the burden of the recurring formal bid process. TCPN already competed our products and services to help increase efficiency, shorten delivery times, and save tax dollars. As a national purchasing cooperative, TCPN has aggregated one of the largest pools of purchasing potential to give small entities the same pricing as the largest buyers.

Designed by educators and security experts – LearnSafe identifies the unique challenges of each location and district, and delivers tailored solutions. Educators and seasoned security experts on the LearnSafe team bring specific expertise in securing school environments. Once certified as a LearnSafe school, a school is universally compliant with broad security standards and requirements.

Expert witness program – LearnSafe's security professionals are available to certified schools that need post-incident representation in times of crisis. If a school must go to court in response to an incident, the LearnSafe professional stands up on behalf of the school and its security efforts.

Minimal visible infrastructure – Heavy signs of security like guards, metal detectors and body screening are alarming to parents, students and teachers, and disruptive to the learning environment. The LearnSafe approach minimizes the visible infrastructure, while maintaining an exceptionally safe learning and teaching environment.

Integrated solutions – LearnSafe provides school administrators with an integrated suite of tools that empowers them and existing security personnel to monitor and respond more effectively. The open architecture solutions that LearnSafe implements tie seamlessly with the existing security infrastructure in schools, allowing districts to preserve their current investments. As well, LearnSafe solutions enable existing staff to manage their jurisdictions more efficiently and effectively – and with a single point of contact.

Prevention focus – Violence at schools is rarely a sudden, impulsive act. In many cases, there are behavioral signs of potential violence before it occurs. It is critical that those in the school environment learn to recognize these signs and take steps to prevent them. Ultimately, it will be your staff that helps create and sustain a safe school climate.

With a program called TEACH Safety, LearnSafe trains school personnel on implementing proven processes for prevention. TEACH Safety is delivered by a “train the trainer” model. Each campus in a district sends a team of three staff members to the one-day basic training. These teams are equipped to present the information at a campus level during faculty meetings or in-service training days.

TEACH Safety is centered around two key pieces of federal legislation: the 2004 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), and No Child Left Behind—Title IV, Safe and Drug-Free Schools, and Title IX, The Unsafe School Choice Option. The TEACH Safety curriculum is consistent with this legislation in that it emphasizes prevention, early detection and accountability.

With these guidelines in mind, LearnSafe-certified schools provide three tiers of increasingly intense educational and behavioral interventions to students:

- **Tier 1** – Universal interventions that apply to all students. Eighty percent of students respond to this level of behavioral intervention.
- **Tier 2** – Targeted/group interventions for about 10 to 15 percent of students.
- **Tier 3** – Individual interventions, such as counseling, for three to five percent of students.

By providing the right level of support for different groups of students, students get the right intervention when needed and teachers and students are able to focus on learning.

Covering all Phases of Security Needs

LearnSafe’s layered security approach addresses all levels of a district’s security needs – before, during and after incidents. The program creates an actionable framework that helps a district mitigate the risk of violence before it occurs. The program empowers the district’s personnel to act quickly and efficiently during an event, and equips decision makers to effectively communicate to the media and school community stakeholders after the event is over.

The following areas are examples of ways in which LearnSafe can protect your district:

Total Site Survey and Risk Assessment

The LearnSafe approach includes a full assessment of school environments:

- Risk assessment/audit to determine vulnerabilities, including an analysis of school incident reports
- In-depth access control studies that examine outside-in access, traffic patterns, local first responder policies, and more
- Perimeter and barrier evaluations
- Continuing education with a world-class training curriculum to continuously enable all to identify “the threat within”

Integrated Access and Surveillance

LearnSafe implements fully integrated, non-intrusive solutions – that tie seamlessly with video systems already in place – to monitor all activity. All are integrated together for simple administration and use.

- Digital video surveillance and access command and control across the district
- School lockdown control
- Scalable security systems that adjust to varying threat levels, allowing you to be proactive, rather than just monitoring

Operational Security Capabilities

- School ID Badging System for all entering school
- Automated employee background checks and screening: national background check, predator database check, driving records, credit reports, level 2 fingerprint checks, drug testing and customized screening programs

Behavioral Intervention Training & Management

LearnSafe is the only initiative in the market today with an integrated behavioral management safety offering and “train the trainer” curriculum. LearnSafe teaches staff to identify and mitigate the threat early, before it manifests:

- Developed by psychologists from Texas A&M University
- Training on when, where and how to intervene
- Helps teachers and administrators identify the difference between a learning disability and an emotional disturbance
- Covers new and emerging government behavioral security requirements
- Fully compliant with IDEA and NCLB as part of a CEU program

Crisis and Emergency Management

- Working groups on crime and violence comprised of individuals from LearnSafe, schools, law enforcement and parents
- Assessment of local security policies and procedures
- Text – SMS – voice mail and email emergency notification
- LearnSafe best practices
- Crisis communications
- Expert witness services

Protect Schools from Internet Threats

Schools also need visibility into the content flowing across their networks to help prevent disruptive and or illegal behavior:

- Anonymous cyber-bullying via web-mail
- Students using home PCs as a proxy

- Students propositioned via instant messaging, or targeted on MySpace.com, FaceBook.com, YouTube.com, etc.
- Students coordinating violent acts and gang activity
- Unnecessary lawsuits
- Online hate activity
- Loss of bandwidth to peer-to-peer protocols
- Students purchasing pre-written term papers
- Loss of PII and compliance with FERPA, HIPAA, etc.

LearnSafe's Prestigious Partners

The LearnSafe Initiative is comprised of some of the nation's most knowledgeable and experienced organizations in the areas of safety, security and behavioral management. Together, LearnSafe partners deliver comprehensive products and services to form the program's layered security approach.

MDI Security Systems

MDI Security Systems manufactures security technology solutions designed to protect people, facilities and assets. The MDI product family currently protects over 8 million alarm points across the globe for many of the world's most recognized organizations, including Microsoft, MBNA Worldwide, John Deere, Pepsi, FBI, TSA, Fidelity Investments, Bureau of Engraving & Printing, American Express, Department of Defense, IRS, Disney, Smithsonian Institution and MIT to name a few.

Under the LearnSafe program, MDI offers technology solutions depending on the needs of each school or district: Unified security management systems, access control, alarm management, monitoring, personnel administration, and surveillance and video recorders – all into a seamlessly unified platform that's simple to use and integrate with other systems. For more information, visit www.mdisecure.com.

The SBS Group

The SBS Group, established by a group of school psychologists out of Texas A&M University, provides a behavior management curriculum as a prevention component of the LearnSafe Initiative. The SBS Group has created the TEACH Safety® curriculum (**T**eacher **E**ducation to **A**chieve **C**hild **S**afety) as the prevention component of the comprehensive LearnSafe Initiative. TEACH Safety offers direct staff training at two levels: basic training to provide teachers with training in classroom management, de-escalation, stress management, and other critical issues related to initiating and sustaining effective, supportive teacher-student interaction; and advanced training to guide assessment staff, administrators, and campus-teams through behavior management issues in a Response to Intervention model. Also included in the advanced training are how to identify and implement effective conflict resolution programs, no-bullying programs, and threat assessment procedures. For more information, visit www.thesbsgroup.org.

Nortel

Doing business in more than 150 countries around the world, Nortel is a recognized leader in delivering communications capabilities that make the promise of Business Made Simple a reality for its customers. Specific to the LearnSafe Initiative, Nortel has designed solutions for voice security and insider risk management (data leakage protection). Nortel's Insider Risk Management portfolio provides a multi-faceted view of a school's inside risks, from full life-cycle management for this network-based content monitoring to onsite support of the school's own inside risk solution. To deliver value to K-12 Customers, Nortel offers a

number of flexible service options to meet a district's budget requirements. In consultation with Nortel consultants, schools can opt for a fully managed service, onsite resident engineers, or other options. For more information about Nortel, visit www.nortel.com.

ASSA ABLOY Door Security Solutions

ASSA ABLOY Door Security Solutions is focused on – and dedicated to – the innovation and implementation of life-safety and security solutions for the K-12 market. ASSA ABLOY Door Security Solutions excels at providing integrated life-safety and security solutions that are seamless in their execution and function and absolute in their operation and performance. ASSA ABLOY Door Security Solutions focuses on the five primary areas of school security to design standardized and integrated life-safety and security solutions: perimeters, operations, service areas, administrative areas and classrooms.

ASSA ABLOY education specialists work with facility managers, architects, locksmiths and school boards to properly assess facility requirements, define the most effective and integrated security solutions, and then install and maintain those solutions. For more information, visit www.assaabloyeducation.com.

Conclusion

Educators are not experts in school security. However, in the event that a violent incident should occur on a campus, the students, parents, media, and general viewing public will expect a district's decision makers to have all of the answers. This is why it is imperative that schools implement a plan that allows them to manage and mitigate their security risks. The LearnSafe Initiative is the only comprehensive school security program that works with school districts to target every layer of safety and security on their campuses – without burdening their existing staff and budget. LearnSafe's turn-key program is customized for each campus and can offer a funding or financing package tailored to the needs of the district. This will enable schools to effectively minimize risk on their campuses, maintain compliance with state and federal security mandates, and at the same time keep the burden on the taxpayer or endowment to a minimum.

The goal: to implement a comprehensive school security program that empowers administrators, teachers, students, and parents to foster a safe environment in which students can learn without fear.

For more information about LearnSafe, visit www.learnsafe.org, or call (866) SAFE-024.