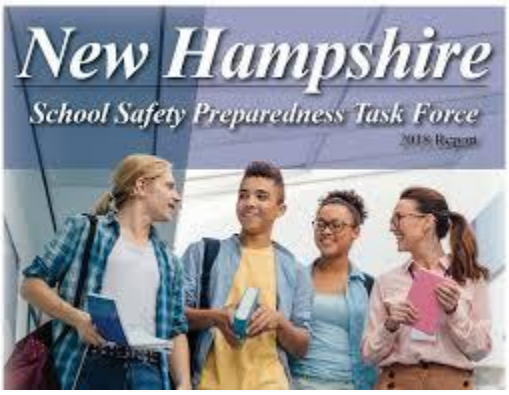
New Hampshire School Safety Construction Planning & Design Guide



This guide is a result of recommendations made by *New Hampshire's School Safety Preparedness Task Force*. The group was formed in 2018 to further Governor Christopher Sununu's goal of making New Hampshire's schools the safest they can be while fostering growth and education.

Planning Recommendation #50

Information within this stand-alone *School Safety Construction Planning & Design Guide* specifically relates to recommendation #50, which advises that the state develop safety and security best practices for new school construction. Please consider implementing these best practices in construction design planning within your district, including modifications to existing structures and systems. They are intended to move the state forward in improving the safety of New Hampshire's students, providing practical, actionable recommendations that maintain the school's integrity and atmosphere, while slowing down a perpetrator.

The task force recognizes that if somebody wants to get into a school, they will. These best practices primarily cover planning, communications and safety enhancements to facilities, and are designed to empower personnel to put planned emergency response plans in place and reduce harm to lives. Facilities upgrades focus on controlling access to the school, identifying the people in the school, early threat detection and notification, and slowing the progress of an assailant while help arrives.

- Not all recommendations will pertain to every school or district's circumstance, but we hope this guide will be a helpful starting point for disrupting the pathway to violence and reaching the goal of enhancing student learning in the safest environment possible.

School Safety Areas to Consider:

- Site Planning & Traffic Flow
- Controlling Building Entry
- Communications & Alarm Systems
- Climate Control
- Classroom Planning & Equipment
- School Review Process

A Construction Planning & Design checklist has been provided at the end of this guide as a planning tool for your team.

NEW HAMPSHIRE SCHOOL SAFETY RESOURCE CENTER

FIRE MARSHAL NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY

For more information about this recommendation, please contact:
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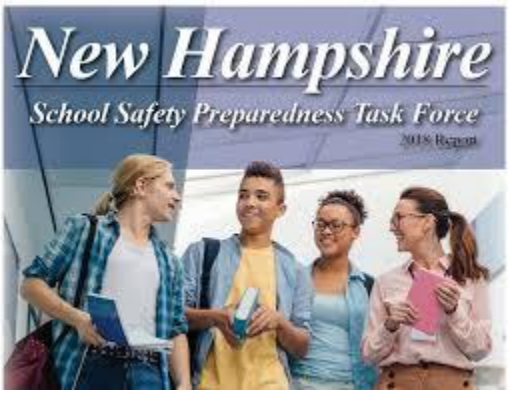

For more detailed guidance and supplemental information about recommendations that are referenced throughout this guide, visit the ***Communications***, and ***Facilities Upgrades*** sections of the **NH School Safety Resources** website. You may also utilize the search bar to quickly find information on a specific topic of interest. www.schoolsafetyresources.nh.gov

Planning Recommendation #50

- Important: Any measures or systems put in place must be maintained and tested regularly.
- It is highly recommended that the school engage their local emergency response resources (fire and police), code official(s) and state fire marshal in the first phases of planning.
- Please note, Task Force Recommendations cited within this guide, can be found in the full *NH School Safety Preparedness Task Force* report (2018). It is available for download at the NH School Safety Resources website. For additional context, the school's construction planning committee should read p.44-49 (Communications), and p.51-57 (Facilities) within that report.
- The construction and safety planning committee should also consider reading p.30-35 (Planning), p.36-41 (Training) and p.43-44 (Exercises), within the full *NH School Safety Preparedness Task Force* report (2018). These sections include information about areas that should always be reviewed in conjunction with facilities upgrades that result in new floorplans and equipment, such as voluntary school security assessments and re-assessments, predetermined responses to emergencies, training and exercises recommendations, and incident command procedures.
- Through its School Emergency Readiness Program, the NH Division of Homeland Security (HSEM) can provide a no-cost, on-site physical security assessment that is customized to your school's environment. Contact Info: (603) 271-2231 schoolreadiness@dos.nh.gov www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/HSEM/SchoolReadiness/
- All NH-based public school construction projects are required to meet the NH state fire code as governed through RSA 153:1. A summary of statutes can be found on the NH State Fire Marshal's website or you may call the office directly.
- All NH public schools are required to meet minimum construction standards set forth in NH Department of Education (DOE)'s Administrative Rules. These standards are known as Ed 321 and can be found on the General Court of New Hampshire's website or by calling NH DOE.

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There are many creative solutions in the site planning process to maintain a welcoming, educational ambiance while ensuring a safe and secure learning environment. The goal is not to create the feeling of a high-security institutional setting. One example is including a large "decorative" granite feature, which doubles as a barricade preventing vehicles from charging into the building. Other suggestions include:

Exterior Access
Consider using fencing and gates to control access. Especially in combination with natural barriers and landscaping, a fencing system can serve as an effective obstacle to keep pedestrians from straying away from areas that are under surveillance, in an aesthetically pleasing and cost-effective manner.

Front Office
Exterior signage should clearly indicate where the front office is located. When changing the location of a front office in an existing structure, ensure adequate new signage is installed and old signage is removed to avoid confusion for visitors and encourage compliance with any new traffic patterns, parking and entrance procedures.

Portable/Temporary Classrooms
Use of portable classroom buildings is highly discouraged. They pose numerous safety and emergency operations challenges including (often) not being tied into the school's mass communication or two-way intercom systems that provide warning and alert information. Other concerns include lighting, door and window locking mechanisms, exits, and visibility to see people outside the classroom.

Multiple Buildings
Extra consideration and coordination are needed for schools that have multiple buildings on a single site. This may include perimeter lighting, pedestrian traffic patterns, natural barriers, surveillance, and alert systems. While these elements are equally important in single buildings, they pose unique challenges on campuses with multiple structures.

Parking Areas
Think about separating staff, student and visitor parking lots or sections, with assigned spots. Consider including a gated FOB system to monitor entry and exit in each area.

Staging Area for Emergency Operations and Support
Important but frequently overlooked, a staging area (cold zone) is a location used to hold resources or organize task forces and strike teams as necessary. Use this as an opportunity to also discuss warm zone operations. Coordination with local police & fire departments is crucial for this piece of site and facility planning. If your school has (or is considering) a School Resource Officer, consider outfitting and utilizing their workspace in tandem with the staging area.

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Time of Day Procedures

Be mindful of natural surges of entry/exit activity at certain times of day (eg. beginning of the day; lunchtime; recess; dismissal), and how this will impact foot and vehicular passage throughout and around the building. This includes where students will line up for the bus and enter/ exit the playground. At these times close oversight is key, including camera monitoring.

Traffic Flow

It is important to separate regular vehicles and bus traffic. Also, think about where fire and police personnel will enter if busses are trying to leave simultaneously. Avoid having both vehicles use the same exit/ entrance. Keep pedestrian flow away from vehicular routes.

Visibility

Good visibility is critical for staff. A wide peripheral view enables them to quickly see something that's out of place while they are working.

- Consider creating good line of site in and around buildings so somebody cannot easily hide. Spaces designed with clear lines of sight make it easier for teachers to supervise students and identify unusual activity. This is further enhanced by eliminating dark corners in hallways, stairs, multipurpose halls, and common areas.
- Review exterior lighting. A well-lighted site is not only easier to observe, but the lighting serves as a psychological deterrent for potential intruders. Consider lighting at the primary entrance and pedestrian pathways.

Related Task Force Recommendations to Keep in Mind

Within the NH School Safety Preparedness Task Force Report, the following recommendations were made pertaining directly to structural and mechanical considerations for enhanced school safety and security. For detailed information please visit www.schoolsafetyresources.com.

Planning Section

- #20 – Schools should consider installing a secure lockbox in a safe location away from the building, such as near the driveway entrance that allows the school to store entrance keys, access cards, and critical documents (e.g. blueprints, floor plans, pre-fire plans, evacuation procedures, shut-off valve locations, disclosures of hazardous materials, etc.)
- #23 – Develop a working group comprised of school leaders to share best practices in school safety and establish mentor relationships between schools

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It is important to balance how "hard" to make entry for unauthorized persons, when thinking about the balance of deterring and stalling access by potential threats vs. resource constraints & general feasibility. These factors will differ depending on school variables. How the public enters the facility instills expectations of behavior and sets boundaries, guidelines, and reinforces policy. One approach is "layered entry," which combines both a structural and process approach to staff, visitor and vendor entry. When looking at structural layout and components, consider options that meet the following specifications:

Access Controls – Consider an electronic door system in which one FOB (aka proximity reader) gets personnel into all schools within a district. This is also applicable for towns that have more than one building on a single campus. It is important to have a hard key and a FOB. It is housed in the off-site knox box.

Building Entry
Establishing a secure, single point of entry is of utmost importance. If there must be multiple points of entry, ensure it they are controlled and monitored.

Cameras/ Surveillance
School officials need to be aware of their surroundings and/or have the ability to observe danger and potential threats. Consider a statewide system such as Mutual Link, which can be used as a shared platform with the local police department.

- Be sure to label each screen view and establish who will monitor the cameras and when. Features include video, VoIP, text messaging, file sharing (such as photos, blueprints and floor plans), and dispatch collaboration. It is recommended that school officials have access to surveillance of the exterior of the facility's critical areas such as parking lots, playgrounds and entryways, from an area that is not visible to guests.
- Interior areas such as stairwells and common areas should be covered.
- Consider the quality of the camera feed when ordering new systems.

Credentialing Vendors/Visitors
A Raptor system enables office staff to conduct an immediate background check. Upon entering the building, a guest or subcontractor submits their driver's license. This is an excellent option, provided there is only one visitor entrance point. Consider implementing an escort protocol and/or having student dismissed to office area for early dismissals vs. parent going to classroom for pick-up.

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Doors

When considering glass that's inside a door, be mindful of the size of the door and consider eliminating glass near the door handle so a shooter can't breach the door immediately by shooting next to the handle.Consider removing exterior door hardware on emergency exit doors only, if not necessary for re-entry.

Ensure that all exterior emergency doors are equipped with alerting systems that activate if these doors are opened.

Window and door numbering are highly recommended. This allows students, teachers, administrators and first responders to effectively comprehend maps and become easily acclimated to the school buildings. The NH Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management in cooperation with the NH Fire and Police Chiefs Association, City of Manchester Police Department, NH Department of Education, and the NH State Fire Marshal's Office have endorsed a model system. These specifications are available from the NH Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM).

Knox Boxes

Consider installing multiple lockboxes on the school proper for day-to-day needs, depending on school size/ layout. Schools should also consider installing a secure lock box in a safe location away from the building, such as near the driveway entrance that allows the school to store entrance keys, access cards, and critical documents, floor plans, pre-fire plans, evacuation procedures, shut-off valve locations, disclosures of hazardous materials, etc. Be sure to work together with your local police and fire departments. A *Secure Lockbox Info Sheet* is available at www.schoolsafetyresources.nh.gov

Polling Places

Over 100 schools in NH are used as polling places for elections. This is an important consideration for school planning. On these days, voters/ members of the public are not vetted the same way as typical visitors. Some voters may also bring firearms onto school property, exercising their right to bear arms. Schools should develop a *detailed* plan that focuses on keeping students safe while people who have not been vetted are in the school. A collaborative approach with local election agencies and law enforcement is recommended.

- Schools may also consider using a free SITE ASSESS application from the REMS (Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools) technical assistance center. This tool incorporates Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, to assess the security of their doors, locks, windows, gates, and walkways.

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Polling Places (*continued*)

- For a *Polling Place Safety Checklist,* please refer to the NH School Safety Resources website. Suggested construction considerations include:

  - Separating voting areas from offices and classrooms, especially where students will be present.
  - Voting locations should focus on reducing voter/student interaction, enhancing traffic/pedestrian safety and complying with ADA standards. Be aware that polls are usualy open from 7am-7pm and election officials may arrive earlier/stay later.
  - Make sure the site's camera system can be positioned to cover polling areas/booths on election day..

Police Accessibility

It is important that law enforcement is able to gain physical entry into the building in the event of emergency situations. Coordinate with them when planning building entry features and protocols.

School Resource Officers (SROs)

During construction planning, determine if an SRO will be assigned to the building and, if so, where will they be situated. Throughout the day, what will their duties be? (e.g.. walking around school vs. monitoring cameras). Consider coordinating the duties and location of an SRO with an established Incident Command Center that can be used during an incident. Integrating facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures and communications during new construction provides an opportunity to improve response capabilities and protocols. This can greatly increase the chances of a successful outcome to an incident

Vestibules

Vestibules are secured spaces with two or more sets of doors and an office sign-in area. They generally serve as a single point of entry, where visitors (or tardy students) are required to enter and check in before gaining access to the rest of the building. Typically, the set of doors between the vestibule and the school remain locked for entry, but can be opened to exit.

- **Doors**
  Maintain a layered approach to the entry that includes at least two sets of locked doors.

- **Fire Extinguishers**
  Keep fire extinguishers outside the secure vestibule, along with any other items that could be used as a weapon.

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Vestibules (*continued*)

- **Windows and Glass**
  This can be expensive and it's important to weigh usefulness vs. "feel good" aspects of glass type and weight/thickness, especially in relation to bulletproof glass. Balance cost with appropriate levels of resistance. Intrusion glazing with bullet proof glazing is typically less costly than bulletproof glass and could be used in limited areas. Consider installing level 3 ballistic glass on the first floor. If used, it should meet the requirements of Underwriters Laboratory (UL) 752 Bullet-Resistent Glazing for a level appropriate to the project.

    - Ballistic films (also known as security film or fragment retention film) are an option to harden existing glass. Coordinate with emergency personnel to ensure that glass *can* be breached by law enforcement and the fire department from at least one spot in the event of an emergency.
    - Avoid making rooms into a "box." (e.g. cafeteria with large windows).
    - It is important to consider whether the planned glass features around the interior doors at the front entrance are designed in such a way that would prevent unauthorized intrusion into the building if they were compromised.

Other things to think about:

- Open Access service windows are becoming common in school reception/ office areas. They are often kept open, which defeats security. Also note that a built-in intercom/speaking portal also creates an area of weakness. Instead, consider a service tray.
- Visibility in and out of the building is an important condsideration for vestibules.
- When considering mirrored glass, keep in mind that in the winter or times when it gets dark, this type of glass becomes transparent and can be seen through.
- Will the area where visitors first interact with school staff be fortified with protective construction material?

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Related Task Force Recommendations to Review

Within the NH School Safety Preparedness Task Force Report, the following recommendations were made pertaining directly to structural and mechanical considerations for enhanced school safety and security. For detailed information please visit www.schoolsafetyresources.com.

Planning Section

- #20 – Knox Boxes
- #22 – Ensure that school safety and communications technologies have maintenance and upgrade plans and all technologies not used frequently are tested quarterly.

Facilities Section

- #51 - Establish a single point of entry into the school with a security vestibule, meaning a vestibule with two sets of doors that is used to prevent furhter access into the building without staff approval.
- #52 – Perimeter fencing around the building
- #53 – Benefits of ballistic glass and security window film
- #55 – Visible door and window numbering system
- $56 – Enhanced monitoring capabilities via surveillance cameras and CCTV
- #57 – Replacing issued keys with door access cards
- #58 – Issuing identification badges
- #59 – Share any facility changes or upgrades with local law enforcement and fire departments

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This section focuses on increasing the ability of school staff to communicate with individuals within the school and with groups outside the school, and vice versa. They also focus on decreasing the amount of time it takes to communicate and on increasing the quantity of critical information that is transferred, in an efficient and time-sensitive manner. During an active shooter event in a school, the ability to share timely information between school staff, school administrators and first responders can literally be a matter of life and death. Interoperability with first responders' systems must be a central consideration in any communications upgrade.

Fire Alarm Systems:
When schools replace, upgrade, or install fire alarms, they should consider having multi-functional alarms to clearly and quickly inform building occupants how to take action. These systems enable streamlined communication for emergency and everyday purposes, and may also be used for regular announcements and class changes.

- Removal of pull stations shall be in accordance with NFPA 72 & 101 and must include coordination with the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ).
- Program fire alarm systems with positive alarm sequence, in coordination with your AHJ. This is an automatic visual or audible pre-signal that creates a short delay that allows designated staff to check the validity of the alarm before a full alarm activates.
- Specific guidance for this is available on the NH School Safety Resources website and is called *Multi-Functional Alarms, Pull Stations & Positive Alarm Sequence Reference Guide*.

Two-Way, In-School Communications
There are many options available to schools. When considering which method to adopt, consider privacy, portability, volume, maximum number of participants, limitations cell service in areas of limited coverage, and cost. Of critical importance is whether the chosen two-way, in-school communication can be used safely during an incident (e.g. the capability to function silently).

Security Alarm Systems
Consider installing a security alarm solution that incorporates intrusion detection, access control, video surveillance and fire alarm testing into one system. Ideally, this system would integrate district-wide for streamlined functionality across multiple buildings.

Radio Communications
- Ensure that the system is interoperable with first responders' systems. Consider installing a repeater communication system inside the building.

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Notification Systems

Similar to panic buttons, these systems have notable advantages. Examples include S.A.F.E. (Safety Alerts for Education) and PowerSchool, which can be installed on every classroom computer and other devices.

In addition to first responders, it is important to have the ability to communicate with parents, other schools and other school district stakeholders. Various systems including Code Red and Reverse 9-1-1 exist to perform these functions and their role should be further examined. Another notification system is E-alerts. FEMA also maintains the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS), which could potentially be used during an active threat. Any of these systems should alert the local police department.

Phones

- Schools should consider reviewing policies to grant staff permission to directly contact 9-1-1, and have that capability installed within each classroom.
- School phones, when being programmed for placing calls to E9-1-1, should be able to display accurate address and location information, down to the floor and room level, for the phone that is being used to make the call. A school's telephone provider, in conjunction with their Multi Line Telephone System (MLTS) vendor, should be able to provide a Private Switch Automatic Location Identification (PS-ALI) account that can send this information through with any call that is made to E9-1-1. To download *Recommendations for Multi-Line Telephone Systems*, please visit www.schoolsafetyresources.nh.gov.
- Schools are encouraged to work with E9-1-1 (The NH Division of Emergency Services and Communications - DESC) to ensure that school phones provide location data and are recorded in the E9-1-1 database. This requires a unique code for each phone (i.e., Direct Inward Dial number). This can be done easily. However, if a phone is moved from its current location, the new location needs to be updated so that the location information in the 9-1-1 database remains current. Alternatively, schools can establish unique codes for each phone jack, which requires less maintenance but is more expensive. (E9-1-1 phone # 603-271-6911)
- Ensure all phones are clearly labeled with 9-1-1 or 9-1-1 preceded by the appropriate prefix to dial out to ensure that anyone will be able to reach E9-1-1 quickly and efficiently. DESC labeling recommendations and instructions can be found at the School Safety Resources website.
- DESC has completed phone audits of every public school district in the state of NH and compiled an assessment of each, which will need to be updated with new construction or communications system upgrades. If you require assistance or have not received a copy of the phone audit for your school, please contact the DESC at database@e911.nh.gov or 603-527-2069.
- If resources permit, new construction planners should seek to establish unique codes attached to each phone jack.
- Consider installing cell phone repeaters or extenders inside the building.

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PA System

It is important for classrooms to be able to access the PA system and be able to call an emergency response action. The ability to hear announcements in the restrooms or outside the building is also important. Regardless of which communications solution schools decide upon, it is important that they ensure their communication system will be interoperable with first responders' systems.

Panic Button/ Distress Signal

These systems should notify the authorities and put out a message to the rest of the school. Consider programming fire doors to remain locked upon fire alarm activation and power loss so they only allow exiting but not entry.

Testing

Before using a new technology tool, every school should lay out a testing plan and ensure a protocol is developed for regular testing, inspecting, and documentation. Notification systems may have many moving parts that need to be coordinated. Since these solutions can connect to multiple devices, it is important that messages get sent to the right places, at the right volume, and in the right format. Please visit www.schoolsafetyresources.com and refer to the *Testing Recommendations for Emergency Communications Technologies* document or reach out to the NH Division of Emergency Services and Communications at (603) 271-6911 for technical assistance.

Related Task Force Recommendations to Review

Within the NH School Safety Preparedness Task Force Report, the following recommendations were made pertaining directly to structural and mechanical considerations for enhanced school safety and security. For detailed information please visit www.schoolsafetyresources.com.

Planning

- #22 – Ensure that school safety and communications technologies have maintenance and upgrade plans and all technologies not used frequently are tested quarterly

Communications

- #37 – Increase communication capabilities and interoperability
- #38 – Clear labeling of phones to facilitate reaching E9-1-1 quickly
- #39 – Authority fo school staff members to directly contact 9-1-1
- #40 – Uniquely coded classroom phone lines, shared with E9-1-1
- #41 – Replacing/ updgrading fire alarms to multi-functional alarms
- #42 – Panic button installation
- #43 – System to notifiy parents, staff and non-first responders of an emergency
- #44 – Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) to assist public schools and local law enforcement with funding for emergency notification software to enhance school safety

Facilities

- #56– Enhanced monitoring capabilities via surveillance cameras

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At the time of this writing, fewer than 10% of schools in New Hampshire have air conditioning or dehumidification systems, making climate control an important issue, especially during warmer months. Addressing mechanical system functionality during planned facility upgrades is essential. Although up-front costs can be expensive, money spent on energy efficiency upgrades can lead to savings over time. A good mechanical system will also keep occupants comfortable. When systems are working well, people are less likely to keep doors and windows open. Not only will this result in monetary cost savings, it is less likely to defeat the hardening of the school. For example, if every single window is open on the ground floor because teachers and students feel overheated, you've completely destroyed any protective systems that were put in place at entry

Potential Solutions that Reinforce Mechanical Efficiency

- Think about the size and number of windows
- Consider placing windows a little higher so they can be opened and closed, thereby you get the function of the ventilation but potential threats have limited visibility.
- Consider vented windows up top that can be opened and closed. We recognize that some schools would like to maintain the ability to pass students out of egress windows, so consider this as well.

Barricading Devices

Barricading devices are not permitted by the State Fire Code. Instead, as a best practice, the School Safety Preparedness Task Force recommends securing all interior doors with a Columbine lock, such that the door can be locked from both sides and unlocked from inside without a key, tool, or special knowledge. For guidance, please download the one page *Columbine-Style Locks Reference Guide,* located on the NH School Safety Resources website. A variance from the NH State Fire Marshal's office may be considered on a case by case basis.

- For funding a Columbine lock initiative, schools may consider an "adopt-a-door" campaign. With this program, school districs can defer the up-front hardware purchase and installation cost. In the program, districts and schools promote the safety adgantages and then student-families agree to contribute a fee toward their student's classroom door. It could also be expanded to community organizations and businesses.

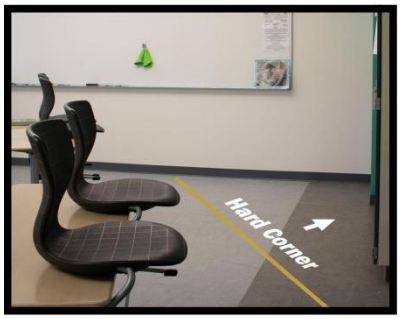
Bathrooms

Having a bathroom in each classroom limits movement around school during learning hours. They can also be used as a lockdown space if needed.

Safe Corner/ Hard Corner Areas

Consider establishing an area within each classroom that is not readily visible when looking into the classroom. These areas are commonly called *hard corners.* Hard corners are areas located at an angle that would prevent someone firing a gun through the classroom door from hitting anyone. Lessons learned from tragic events in other states include recommending that schools adopt hard corner safety measures.

Hard Corner Example



Once the hard corner is identified, marking the area for easy recognition during an emergency is vital. Indicating the hard corner can be done by marking the floor, using a logo or mascot image on the wall, or a combination of the two. Marking the hard corner should be consistent from room to room. This allows teachers, substitutes, and staff to acclimate to the procedure regardless of what room they find themselves in. For information about how to integrate hard corners into an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), schools may contact NH Homeland Security Emergency Management's School Readiness Program.

Doors
Consider a policy in which classroom doors are kept closed. Consider utilizing remote control of doors that can be locked without a physical key are one option. Purchase doors with windows that are away from the door handle side. This prevents an intruder from easy access if they break the glass. When it comes to intervening classroom doors (aka doors that are between connected classrooms), they should be reviewed on a case by case basis. In some cases, with installation of sprinkler systems, these doors are not required. If compliant with the code, we suggest removal of such doors. When they are required, it is important to establish a practice of keeping primary classroom doors closed and locked.

Numbering
Consider providing reflective room numbers inside classrooms, above doors. This is extremely helpful for a substitute or anyone that may need to call for outside help.
See recommendations for School Door and Window Labeling from NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM), endorsed by the NH Fire and Police Chiefs Association, City of Manchester Police Dept, NH Dept of Education, and the NH Fire Marshal's Office.

Visibility
Consider shades for doors.

Related Task Force Recommendations to Review

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Facilities
- #54 – Columbine locks on interior doors

Planning
- #21 – Develop an inventory list for emergency go-kits that schools should create, keep in classrooms, examine and update.

Training
- #24, #26 - Staff, students, etc. re: behavioral warning signs and pre-incident indicators, along with the school's emergency operations plan.

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School Construction planning and review should include the following parties, in accordance with best practices and state statutes:

NH Department of Education (DOE)
All public schools are required to meet Ed 321, minimum construction standards for NH's public schools. *Note that we don't have any regulations for nonpublic schools as it relates to construction.*

Website: www.education.nh.gov
Contact information: Email info@doe.nh.gov or call (603) 271-3494

Local Building Officials
Reviews plans and specifications for all school construction in their jurisdiction.

It is important to involving local officials at the beginning of any new construction or facilities upgrade planning process.

Local Police and Fire Departments
These entities should be included in the beginning stages of all emergency operations planning, including as it relates to site planning and traffic flow. Please refer to RSA 189:64 for further information on the coordination with local emergency response officials.

Every fire chief in NH is required to inspect each public and private school within their jurisdiction once per year in relation to occupancy loads, egress, protection, operating features, building services & inspection documentation, school security and emergency planning.

NH Fire Marshal's Office (FMO)
Responsible for reviewing plans and specifications prior to all pubic school construction, to ensure compliance with the NH State Fire Code and the NH State Building Code. Also provides technical assistance to non-public schools as needed.

Website: www.nh.gov/firesafety (navigate to Building Safety & Construction section)
Contact Information: Email fmo@dos.nh.gov or call (603) 223-4289 to obtain a Plan Review Submission Request form or make an appointment.

School Construction planning and review should include the following parties, in accordance with best practices and state statutes:

NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM)
Responsible for the School Readiness Program, HSEM provides tools and techical assistance including a physical security assessment and school door and window labeling recommendations. They also administer the School Training and Exercise program and twice a year offer an Emergency Operations Planning (EOP) Workshop as part of RSA: 189:64.

- Per RSA 189:65, all schools are required to submit an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) by September 1st each year. A submission portal can be found at the following link: https://prd.blogs.nh.gov/dos/hsem/?page_id=3910

Website: www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/hsem/school-readiness
Email schoolreadiness@dos.nh.gov or call (603) 271-2231.

NH Department of Education (DOE) Governance

PART 300 PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Ed 321.13 Fire Safety Requirements.

(a) All construction of school facilities shall meet the requirements of the state fire code under Saf-C 6000. The drawings and specifications of public school construction shall be evaluated by the state fire marshal according to the state fire code. Pursuant to RSA 153, the state fire marshal shall judge the drawings and specifications according to other related parts and standards of the Life Safety Code under NFPA Doc. No. 101, and the state building code under RSA 155-A.

(b) The certificate of substantial completion shall not be issued to the construction contractor prior to receipt of a letter of approval of the design from the state fire marshal.

(c) Variances for the provisions of Ed 321.13 may be granted by the state fire marshal in accordance with the provisions of Saf-C 6005.

Related Task Force Recommendations to Review

Within the NH School Safety Preparedness Task Force Report, the following recommendations were made pertaining directly to structural and mechanical considerations for enhanced school safety and security. For detailed information please visit www.schoolsafetyresources.com.

Facilities

- #54 – Columbine locks on interior doors

Planning

- #12 -- All school plans submitted under RSA 189:64 shall be reviewed by the State every three years based on current best practices. (p.36)
- #14– Re-evaluate the Homeland Security and Emergency Management school assessment process every three years to ensure assessors use the latest standards, knowledge and techniquest (p.36)
- #19 - Current blueprints (i.e. floor plans) must be submitted to local law enforcement and the Dept of Safety in hardcopy or commonly used digital format. After the initial submission, updates will be provided in a timely manner when changes are made to a building.

For more information about this recommendation, please contact:
Deputy State Fire Marshal Sean P. Toomey , P.E.
Sean.Toomey@dos.nh.gov
603-223-4289

School Safety Considerations

Date_____

School Name:_____ District:_____
Address: _____
Project Name: _____
Contact(s): _____

Item	Notes	Status (Due Date, Done/ or N/A)
❑ Site Planning and Traffic Flow		
Exterior Access		
Front Office		
Multiple Buildings		
Parking Areas		
Staging Area for Emergency Ops Support		
Time of Day Procedures		
Traffic Flow		
Visibility		
❑ Controlling Building Entry & Visibility		
Access Controls		
Building Entry		
Cameras/ Surveillance		
Credentialing		
Doors		
Glass		
Knox Boxes		
Polling Place		
School Resource Officers (SROs)		
Vestibule		

For more information about this recommendation, please contact:
Deputy State Fire Marshal Sean P. Toomey , P.E.
Sean.Toomey@dos.nh.gov
603-223-4289

Item	Notes	Status (Due Date, Done/ or N/A)
❑ Communications & Alarm Systems		
Fire Alarm Systems		
Security Alarm Systems		
Radio Communications		
Notification Systems		
Phones		
Cameras		
PA System		
Panic Button/ Distress Signal		
Testing		
❑ Climate Control		
Air Conditioning		
Dehumidification		
Mechanical System Efficiency		
❑ Classroom Planning & Equipment		
Bathrooms		
Doors		
Hard Corners		
Numbering		
Visibility		
❑ School Review Process		
Local Building Official(s)		
Local Police		
Local Fire Department		
NH Department of Education		
NH Fire Marshal's Office		
NH Homeland Security & Emerg. Mgmt.		

For more information about this recommendation, please contact:
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