

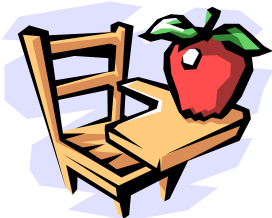
THE FACTS

- Working with limited resources is a way of life for public schools!
- Securing a school's property is ever more critical today than in years past.
- Stretching limited resources is a way of life for law enforcement agencies!
- Protecting the general public is an even greater challenge.

The reality is that police resources are limited and should never be wasted. Thousands of police patrol hours are spent investigating alarm reports that turn out to be "False Alarms."

Times have changed, building usage has changed and security systems must also change with the times. Security systems must be regularly maintained and upgraded as usage of facilities change.

Alarm companies and alarm users must be responsible for the use and maintenance of alarm systems to help assure prompt police response when an emergency really does exist.



19. When upgrading or expanding an alarm system, specify that the equipment be listed for fire alarm (and possibly card access if it is not part of the current system) uses at a later date. This will save the cost of another control panel and rewiring should fire protection be desired or mandated in the future.
20. Nothing of value should be placed within arms reach of windows. Take care in deciding the placement of expensive computer and electronic equipment.
21. Properly instruct system users on false alarm prevention. With police resources so limited and national statistics showing that approximately 80% of alarm activations are caused by user error, it is essential to properly train employees, and anyone else that has access to the facility's keys, on proper system operation. Should any alarm activations occur, a timely investigation into the cause should be performed.
22. Ensure that alarm activation reports are reviewed by supervisory personnel on a weekly basis.



Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Professionals

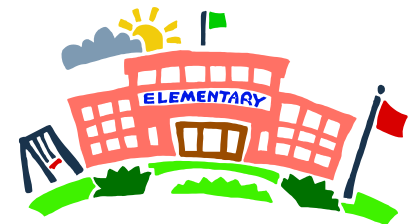
False Alarm Reduction Association (FARA)
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Phone: 301-519-9237 / Fax: 301-519-9508
www.faraonline.org

*Special thanks to the following organizations
for their contributions to this brochure:*
AOT Public Safety Corporation CryWolf Solution
www.psc-crywolf.com
California Alarm Association, Adopt-A-City Program
National Burglar & Fire Alarm Association

FALSE ALARM REDUCTION ASSOCIATION

FALSE ALARM PREVENTION FOR SCHOOLS

*Does YOUR School
Security System
Cry Wolf?*



- False Alarms Cost System Users \$\$\$
- False Alarms Waste Valuable Police Resources
- "Crying Wolf" Can Delay Response When You Really Need It

SCHOOLS CAN REDUCE FALSE ALARMS

- When were your systems last inspected?
- Proper training of all system users is essential in maintaining false alarm free systems.
- When was your last alarm system training meeting?
- Do any of your teachers work on Saturdays?
- Do they know how to operate the alarm systems?

The security system needs to be more than another utility. A partnership between the users and the security company are critical in proper loss prevention and in reducing or minimizing false alarms. Obviously, financial considerations are an issue and, as technology changes, other options may be more affordable and appropriate.

Is the school facility used by outside groups on evenings and weekends? If so, be sure you have implemented steps to ensure that these groups do not cause false alarms. Identify the person(s) responsible for ensuring that all people have left the building, for securing and locking the facility and for arming the security system. Ensure that this person(s) has been thoroughly trained on the proper procedures, including the appropriate codes, for canceling an alarm dispatch.

Be absolutely sure to secure *ALL* doors and windows before arming the alarm system. Sports teams that may be using your athletic fields in the evenings or on weekends may try to gain access to the facility for water and/or bathroom breaks. If your doors are unlocked, the kids **will** enter. Unless you are prepared to swear out a warrant for unlawful entry, this will be considered a false alarm! It is your responsibility to ensure that doors are properly secured and locked.

Ensure that there is an audible indication at the school site when an alarm is activated so that the alarm users know when the alarm has activated and can take steps to avoid false dispatches. If all parties involved work together to minimize false alarms, the community will often join the security team and help watch over the facility, acting as another deterrent for the criminal element.

PREVENT YOUR SCHOOL SECURITY SYSTEM FROM CRYING WOLF

1. Focus attention on protecting high risk areas.
2. Request that the Head of Security for the school district be involved in the process. The Head of Security should be informed about every false alarm response.
3. Help the school district security create a way to document each false alarm response.
4. Install audible indicators so that intruders are aware that they have been detected. Dispatching on dual sensor activations may help reduce the occurrence of false alarms.
5. Re-design systems so that only limited areas of protection are disarmed when after hour access is needed. High Risk areas (computer & science labs, music rooms, office areas) should be armed at the end of the school day and disarmed only for cleaning at night.
6. Assure that the system is designed to allow access to the keypad(s) from the various areas. Consider placing keypads in the following areas: office area (for arming/disarming the office as well as a master for the entire site); computer lab (to operate that system independently from the other sites); classrooms; cafeterias and multi-purpose rooms; and gyms (can be set up to arm/disarm independently due to the varied usages and users). Your alarm provider can design your system to meet both your usage and financial needs.
7. Implement a detailed program identifying system users. Key-swipe entry into a building is a good



- way to track who has been accessing the building and, therefore, might be an effective way to determine who needs additional training on arming or disarming the alarm system.
8. If financially practical, assign individual arm/disarm codes for each system user.
 9. Schedule annual system inspections.
 10. Arrange periodic user training. The best time of year to conduct training is right before school begins and after returning from each break (such as Christmas and Spring breaks).
 11. Have the systems monitored by professional central stations with supervised arming/disarming and routine test reporting.
 12. Have the site principal determine the arming/disarming time for each area of protection. Through open communication with the alarm company, arming schedules can be tailored for each site's use/personality.
 13. Once a schedule is established, the central station should contact either the principal or other designated district employee when a system is left unarmed or is disarmed outside of regularly scheduled hours. Site principals and district staff should assume the responsibility of controlling access to the facilities . . . *this isn't a police problem.*
 14. Weekly reports should be sent to the school site indicating when the systems were actually turned on and off and by which user.
 15. Use the most advanced technology to allow affordable installations (supervised wireless or hardwired equipment, as the building construction dictates).
 16. Maintain strict control over key assignments, considering single door access systems to replace old keylocks.
 17. When it is necessary to request police dispatch, district personnel should also respond, but never enter the building without police escort.
 18. Be cautious in spending valuable resources. Use proper perimeter and interior protection and supervised arming/disarming. Properly installed and maintained interior motion sensors can protect classrooms, eliminating the cost of full perimeter protection. Doors to high risk/critical areas should always be contacted.

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