



# Active Shooter Response Plan for K-12

Using technology to prevent school shootings and protect lives

## Mitigating and preventing active shooter incidents

K-12 educational institutions face a unique set of challenges when managing growing threats like severe weather events, active shooter incidents, and cyberattacks. Critical events and disasters have become more frequent, prompting many schools to review school security and safety programs, especially when mitigating and preventing active shooter incidents. While the likelihood of experiencing an active shooter incident is low, incidents have unfortunately grown in recent years.

There was a total of 93 school shootings with casualties at public and private elementary and secondary schools in 2020–21, the highest number since the 2000–01 school year. Active shooter incidents can have a serious impact on students, faculty, staff, and the community.

## A phased approach to protecting lives at K-12 educational institutions

### Mitigating Impact

- Create a Threat Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) or a Security Vulnerability Analysis (SVA) to review systems, infrastructure, and building design.
- **Consider these questions:**
  1. Are responders familiar with the school or have access to the floor plans of the impacted area?
  2. What types of access control do school buildings have?
  3. Is there a full-time security presence?
  4. Is a notification system in place to immediately notify the community?

### Preparedness

- Build relationships with various stakeholders through training and exercises to prepare students, faculty, staff, and response partners prior to an incident.
- Identify gaps when practicing emergency operations plans through various scenarios.
- Implement corrective actions accordingly.

### Response

- 01 Detect the active shooter:** Maintain visibility around the perimeter via video surveillance and officers. If a 911 call is made, public safety answering points will be the first to know it is an active shooter situation.

- 02 Alert impacted people:** Create a communications plan and develop templates prior to an incident to share situational awareness to the impacted people, reducing human error. Include various methods of communication in your planning.
- 03 Enable resources to respond:** Integrate systems and processes to help accelerate response time. Collaborate with partners to allow access to floor plans.
- 04 Control the environment:** First responders will physically secure the perimeter throughout the event, but digital perimeter security will ensure anyone coming toward the impacted area can receive an alert notification to provide awareness and share reunification information.
- 05 Resolve the incident:** Ensure life safety and eliminate the threat quickly. Communicating with those impacted and the community will provide situational awareness.



## Recovery policies and procedures

The last step in the phased approach is recovery. While it may be the most time-consuming, short-term and long-term recovery efforts are vital to rebuilding after an active shooter situation, especially on a school campus.

Short-term recovery will begin with the reunification process. This includes tending to the health and safety of those immediately impacted by the incident.

Long-term recovery will focus on rebuilding the community and institution, which can take months or even years. Review action items and plans, and be sure to document lessons learned from previous events or similar incidents that may have happened outside of your institution. Discuss the type of actions and response needed if something similar happened at your school.

## How technology can help

Advancements in technology can help keep K-12 schools safe by integrating systems and automating processes through a single common operating picture. Having a unified view of your environment can be difficult with disparate systems putting educators, staff, and students at risk.

When automating actions such as activating response teams or emergency operation plans, response times from first responders will be accelerated, reducing time spent manually dealing with an active shooter incident. In 51 cases studied by the FBI, the median response time was three minutes, but 14 of those cases (27%) took five minutes or longer. Shaving minutes (or even seconds) off of the response time could save countless lives in an active shooter incident.

To keep students, faculty, and staff safe, ensure that the appropriate processes are taken and expand your reach so that more people receive your message about life safety. Getting the right information to the right people at the right time will help lead people to protection.

Active shooter incidents are unpredictable and evolve quickly, creating a lasting effect on students, faculty, staff, and communities they impact. With so many children confined in small spaces, there is a high potential for loss of life and little warning, which makes forming an active shooter response one of the most difficult challenges facing K-12. However, it is not an impossible feat. We now have the technology to protect students and staff better than ever before.



# About Everbridge

Everbridge, Inc. (NASDAQ: EVBG) is a global software company that provides enterprise software applications that automate and accelerate organizations' operational response to critical events in order to Keep People Safe and Organizations Running™.

Everbridge serves 8 of the 10 largest U.S. cities, 9 of the 10 largest U.S.-based investment banks, 47 of the 50 busiest North American airports, and 9 of the 10 largest U.S.-based health care providers. Everbridge is based in Boston with additional offices in 25 cities around the globe.

For more insights visit [Everbridge.com](https://Everbridge.com), read the company [blog](#), and follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).

[Get in touch](#) to learn about Everbridge, the resilience platform.

