

# CAMPUS SECURITY & LIFE SAFETY

A SPECIAL SECTION TO *SECURITY PRODUCTS*

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A photograph of two men standing in front of a modern building with large windows. The man on the left is wearing a light blue dress shirt, a yellow and blue striped tie, and dark trousers. The man on the right is wearing a dark suit jacket, a white shirt, and a red tie. They are both smiling. The background shows a brick building and a sign with the number '0 25 90'.

STANDING  
ABOVE  
THE REST  
S8

## FEATURE



# STANDING ABOVE THE REST

By Ralph C. Jensen

THERE ARE SOME SCHOOLS AND CAMPUSES THAT HAVE PREPARED THEMSELVES SO WELL ABOVE OTHERS THAT THEY ARE VIRTUALLY A BEACON ON THE HILL IN TERMS OF SECURITY. NOT ONLY ARE THEY PREPARED, BUT THEY ALSO KNOW THAT THREATS ARE TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY, AS NO ONE IS IMMUNE FROM AN INCIDENT.

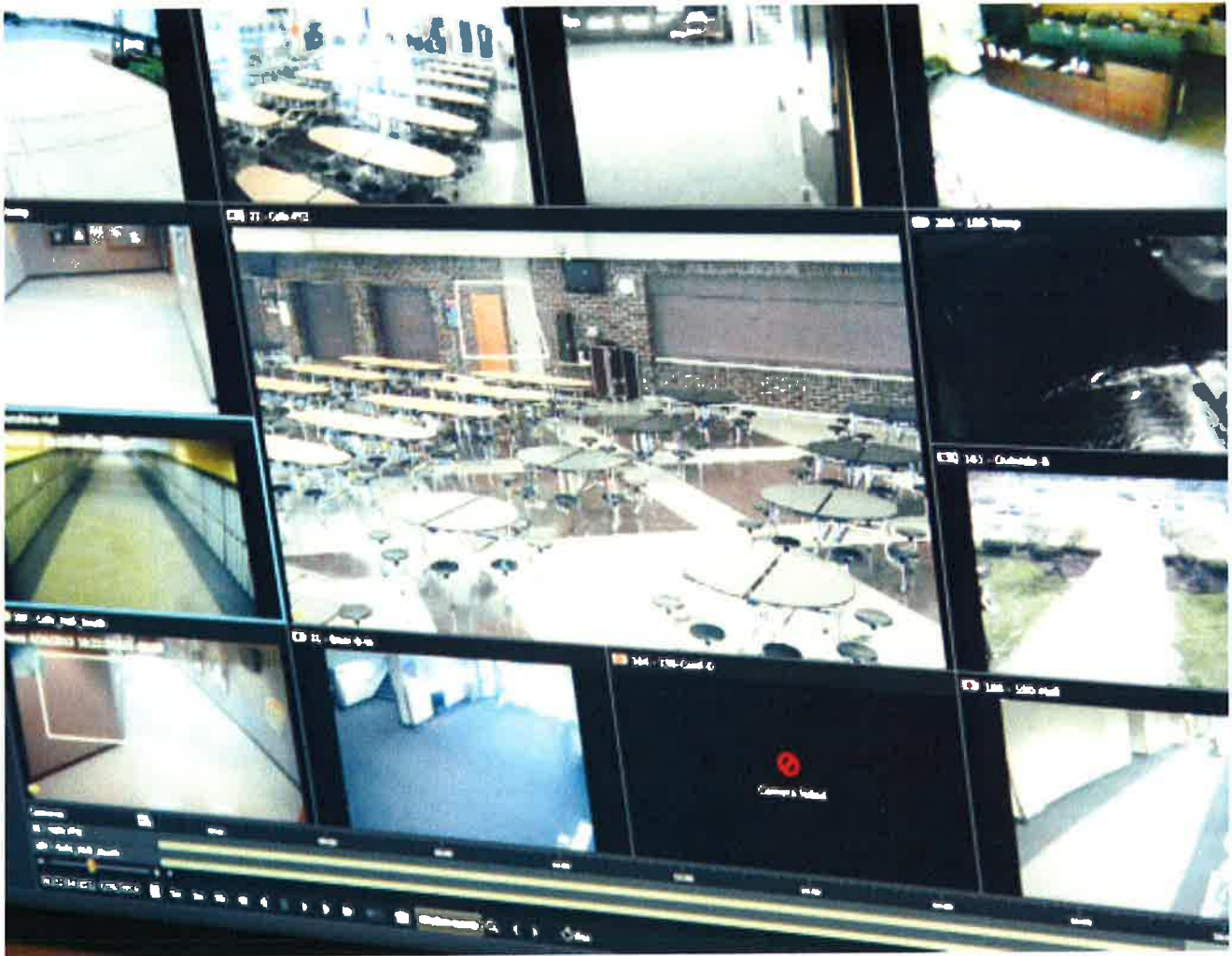
Thoughts of superiority are when someone gets hurt. Preparation means saving lives.

The Penn-Harris-Madison (PHM) School Corporation exercises its security plan often, and to that end, they invite local law enforcement and their security provider, Honeywell Building Solutions, to participate in enforcement procedures, mock events and planning. "We have more than 15 years of work experience with the school corporation," said John Isherwood, senior marketing manager at Honeywell. "We started with burglar alarms and access control, all of which led to CCTV. This is a very integrated school system and once we started with them, we helped them migrate with the newest technologies."

## ALL ABOUT PENN-HARRIS-MADISON SCHOOL CORPORATION

Located in northern Indiana, Penn-Harris-Madison School Corporation has been serving students in eastern St. Joseph County since 1963. Over the years, Penn-Harris-Madison has built a reputation for excellence in education that is recognized around the state. The district serves 10,600 students in 11 elementary schools, three middle schools and one high school. All 15 schools received an "A" rating from the Indiana Department of Education last year, and Penn's graduation rate was 96 percent for 2012. The district maintains a commitment to high-quality, academic programs with a strong teaching staff, current technology and excellent facilities. Extracurricular and co-curricular programs consistently rank among the best in the state. These schools provide a safe, nurturing environment that brings out the best in each student, and parent support and involvement is enthusiastic.

"We try to be the best at everything we do," said Dr. Jerry Thacker, school superintendent. "We employ private law enforcement along



with school resource officers to keep things running smoothly. Most of all, we expect and have parental activity in all school events.”

The corporation encompasses approximately 135 square miles with the northern boundary along the Michigan state line, the eastern boundary along the Elkhart County line, the southern boundary along the Marshall County line and the western boundary along the Harris, Penn and Madison Township lines.

#### APPROACH TO SECURITY

Security at PHM is nothing new. They don't talk about one big project every couple of years because upgrades are ongoing, and corporation money is earmarked every year to make safety and security more relevant and noticeable.

“Our security projects are part of a three-layer approach to safety,” said Mike Seger, director of safety and student services at the school corporation. “For instance, we want to be innovative and use the edge of technology to protect students, staff and school employees.”

This three-layer approach is employed in accessing the office areas:

1. An Aiphone entry and access control system is deployed, and each visitor must press a button to announce their arrival.
2. A camera is mounted above the intercom where the office staff can see who is requesting permission to enter.
3. Once entry is granted, the visitor enters a secure vestibule where

they are visually checked a second time and then permitted entry through the second set of secure doors.

4. Visitors then have their ID checked against the National Sex Offender Registry, issued a badge and granted entrance.

“This is a perfect way to manage our visitors,” Seger said.

The school corporation also has installed 3M window film on all first floor exterior windows.

“We've added a digital video management system at all elementary schools, which are tracked and accessible on the district level,” explained Seger.

Even though all video is stored within the district, only those school officials that have rights to access the video can actually see it. If there is a threat on school property, there are cameras inside the schools and around the perimeter that give first responders a “first view” to see what is going on and how best to minimize any threats. This digital video manager is provided through VPN remote access to the St. Joseph County Police for emergency response only.

“This makes it difficult for a vandal or perpetrator to enter any building,” Seger said. “This will hold someone out for a period of minutes while staff is able to call for help. It acts as a deterrent to break through or get in. Delaying access to the building will allow time to call law enforcement, and at the same time, press the remote holdup buttons.”

The layer 1 remote holdup buttons activate a security door that will

stop a perpetrator from reaching the learning areas with students or staff. These doors were added to elementary buildings during the summer months as part of the security upgrades.

The school corporation decided to enclose elementary learning centers. Classrooms that once had been an open concept design, now have doors and walls to secure the learning areas. The doors have been relocked where an instructor can now flick an interior thumb latch to secure the students inside.

"We want to be a leader in safety and security," Seger said. "We have partnered with Honeywell Building Systems and other vendors in order to think outside the box in terms of safety and security."

**ACTIVE SHOOTER PRACTICE**

PHM has acted as the host training site for an active shooter event, which involves law enforcement on every level, fire departments and EMT staff. District officials believe they have the safest school district in America, providing safe schools for their stakeholders.

"Working with Penn-Harris-Madison has shown us they are a thought leader in every way," said Julio Ampuero, America's security leader for Honeywell Building Solutions. "Of course, their number one priority is the education of students, but very close behind that



is the security and safety of those students. The school has developed a culture of awareness, which is essential to the success of everyone at the school."

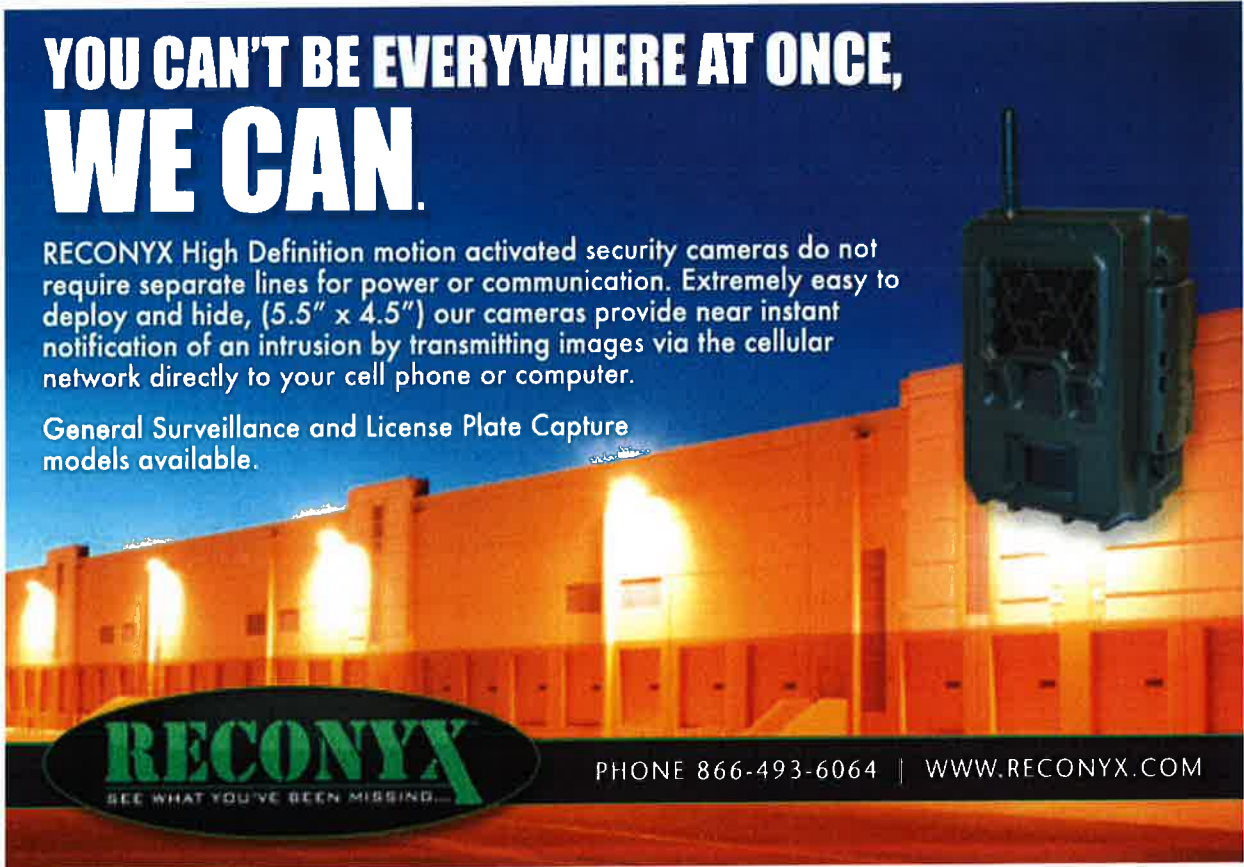
Honeywell officials worked hand in hand with school officials and representatives of the medical community and law enforcement to train during an active shooter event, and

helped train new users on the school's digital video management system. Additionally, Honeywell officials were able to help optimize the system's capabilities by determining proper or better positioning of cameras that would help emergency responders know what is happening inside the school hallways. PHM has used these camera views to produce train-

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ing videos for schools, police and fire departments as a result.

Following the active shooter event, Honeywell hosted a debrief session for the city's first responders using the recorded footage on the school's digital video management system to enable first responders to critique their performance and reactions. Honeywell was able to show the movement of the shooter from entry to capture, and the movement of police and fire rescuers throughout the training event was also tracked.

"This was a collaborative effort to make sure everyone understands what the possibilities are in case of an emergency," Isherwood said. "It all comes back to more than 15 years of trust and experience."

#### SAFETY - THE HIGHEST PRIORITY

Seventy percent of this district's students participate in extra circular activities. This puts a higher responsibility of safety and security on the school and its resource officers, but Thacker said that there are a lot of people in the district that are doing outstanding work. Security in the schools lends itself to one of the top music program in the nation and a teacher of the year named in 2011. Even Thacker was named as the Indiana Superintendent of the Year in 2012.

"We ratcheted up school security dramatically," Thacker said. "After Columbine and Sandy Hook, we looked at what changes needed to happen then focused on what we could do to make all schools in the district safer."

Thacker's point was to guarantee that every student felt valued and significant, and that they were physically and psychologically safe, with the goal of ensuring that students were able to focus completely on school and able to excel.

"We have had minor kinds of things happen; nothing catastrophic," Thacker said. "We routinely exercise drug searches with K-9 officers and the Indiana State Police, and rarely have had a drug incident. We've added additional security staff monitoring the hallways, and they do their work with a desire to see students achieve."

Penn-Harris-Madison officials keep the lines of communication open when it comes to security. This partnership allows Honeywell technicians to be onsite every day while sales staff continues to present a big portfolio of solutions to school officials.

It is all part of the student learning process. Keep the school safe, and students have the opportunity to learn without fear of a high-profile incident.



*Ralph C. Jensen is the editor-in-chief of Security Products magazine.*