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## How to Balance Stakeholders and Budgets when Introducing New Safety Solutions



**Risk knows no boundaries. Security chiefs need to take every reasonable precaution to mitigate as many chances as possible while balancing the needs of a range of stakeholders and budgetary limitations.**

According to the [Partner Alliance for Safer Schools \(PASS\)](#), schools and hospitals face similar challenges, including:

- Burglary and theft (school resources, students stealing from other students, break-ins)
- Internal theft (money, resources, confidential information);
- Violence (everything from bullying to fights, rape, knife, and gun crime);
- Drugs (buying, selling and using on-site).

Schools also face specific threats that include the following:

- Parental custody issues
- Unsupervised visitors
- Gangs, drugs and related crime/violence (even in private schools)
- Before and after school programs and sports
- Unsupervised visitors on-site
- Contractors on-site
- High-traffic times of the day (opening, closing, lunch)

- Risk of kidnapping and sexual predators
- Disciplinary issues and violence
- Community using facilities, or trespassing

Every one of these are risks that security chiefs need to plan for. These days, most private schools already have a comprehensive security plan in place, created to mitigate these and other risk concerns. This plan should cover everything from access control to ongoing training and awareness for security staff, teachers, and local law enforcement.

But as risks and threats evolve, so do the solutions designed to combat them. It can be challenging justifying the need to introduce new solutions while balancing the needs of stakeholders and budgets.

Since Parkland, some schools have started turning themselves into fortresses. With armor and more gun drills than ever before. How schools are designed is also changing, reducing the number of entrances, while increasing the number of safe exits and cameras. It would cost billions to make schools as secure as prisons or some government facilities, which wouldn't be ideal for students and parents.

In New Jersey, [for example](#), there is now a safety academy, closer working partnerships with law enforcement and a designated safety specialist who receives ongoing training. This model, alongside private support, could work well across the country, providing budgets are increased to prevent the risk from shooters and violence in schools.

### **How to Introduce New Security Solutions**

Start with a risk assessment. Whatever the threat, or perceived threat, whether internal or external, you need a clear idea what the risks are or downside risk of failing to implement a new security solution.

Maybe you've heard that a peer school in the area has already put something similar in place. Find out what made them try something new. In the same area, with a comparable student population, facing similar threats, surely there is a reason? How they justified something and how you will, will be different, but this is information worth finding out.

Next, after assessing various risk factors, come up with a probability ratio, so that you can present a clear business case. Review trends, starting with local patterns (on campus, go back at least 36 months) and progressing to national trends so that you understand why a new solution is needed. Private schools are businesses. Although the stakeholders you serve all want the same thing: to keep students, teachers, parents, and visitors safe, principals and boards also need to watch budgets and profitability.

This balanced approach for risk mitigation and stakeholder management is why PASS recommends a layered and phased approach. Depending on budgets, this may be the best approach a school can make to introduce new solutions, without requiring additional budget.

After you've got approval, introduce a new solution in such a way to make it visible to stakeholders. Train new security staff and teachers, as needed. Demonstrate new capabilities to make those you are protecting aware that security is driving new initiatives forward to safeguard them.

*Every school has different challenges. If you're looking for new ways to protect your campus, Sabre can help. Call us at 212-974-1700 or book a [free consultation here](#).*