

Ideas to Enhance Your Security at Minimal to Low Cost

Independent schools and campuses use a variety of avenues to fund their security upgrades. The ideas described below are based on examples from schools around North America. As with any discussion of security, Prizmah: Center for Jewish Day Schools offers guidance and reminds leaders to always check with their own security personnel and advisors before enacting any measures. If you have instituted an idea that is not listed here, please share it with Amy Wasser (amyw@prizmah.org), and we will anonymously share it with the field.

JCC Memberships for Law Enforcement

In order to increase the presence of security, one JCC provides fitness memberships to all of the officers at the sheriff's sub-station closest to them, and that brings a variety of deputies to campus throughout the day and brings them inside the facility. The JCC also arranged for several of the officers park their off-duty sheriff's department cars on campus when they're not in use. As a result, there are usually four or five law enforcement cars on campus at all times. In addition, when officers write up their daily notes, particularly in the evening/early morning hours, they occasionally do so in their cars on the campus rather than in the office. This creates an additional presence of security.

Campuses as Training Facilities

Law enforcement agencies regularly seek locations for on-site training exercises. Some Jewish day schools reach out to their local law enforcement agencies and offer the use of their campuses to different law enforcement providers including:

- Canine units
- SWAT teams
- Fire department

Inviting law enforcement agencies to train on your school grounds has advantages in that the agencies will often provide sweeps of the campus, offer emergency preparedness guidance, and have the campus layout on their internal computer systems for immediate access in case of a future emergency.

Pro-bono Crisis Management Planning

Determine if there is a PR firm in your community that specializes in crisis management planning and ask if they will do initial work for you pro bono or at a reduced rate. All schools and campuses should have a crisis management plan. This plan should include, but is not limited to:

- Documenting your Crisis Management model
- Identifying your Crisis Management Team
- Documenting communication protocols among internal members of your team
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities
- Determining appropriate decision making authority and responsibilities both internally and more broadly

Two PR firms that specialize in crisis management have offered to consult with any of our schools who are interested.

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Department of Homeland Security Nonprofit Grants

Many states have funding for nonprofit organizations to apply for security upgrade grants. You can find out more about those [here](#). These funds cannot be used for personnel, but for campus security hardware enhancement including, but not limited to, fences, bollards, gates, cameras, locking systems, phone improvements, window tinting, and glass replacement.

One school has had success in partnering with their local politician's office and was offered access to their staff grant writer and security advisory team. Reach out to your local politicians (congressman, senators, and councilmen) and see if they will give you access to their grant writers to assist with the compilation of your grant.

Matching Gifts

Your constituency should see security enhancements as a positive use of funds. Instituting a match campaign to increase your spending capacity also will unite your community toward a common goal of keeping your campus secure. Work with your school's development professional and/or board to create a list of security upgrades (i.e., new lock on front door, mirror outside front door so receptionist can see who is approaching, updated communication system, new classroom locks, safe room locks, check-in ID system.) Identify a donor, and then challenge the community to match the gift, being clear that the funds will be used for security enhancements. Consider running multiple matches in order to acquire the gifts needed to purchase all items on your list.

Citizens Corp.

Consider having a member of your school join your local Citizens Corp. This is a FEMA initiative, and the goal is to harness the power of every individual through education, training, and volunteer service to make communities safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to the threats of terrorism, crime, public health issues, and disasters of all kinds. They focus on emergency preparedness and resilience as well as hometown security and safety. This is one more way to connect to emergency personnel in your local area. Click [here](#) to find your local group.



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