

SECURITY

LESSONS LEARNED

by Denise S. Diesler, Marketing Communications Writer



Video security has become an increasingly important component of school security plans throughout the country, and it can benefit high schools in many ways as they strive to create a safer and more secure environment for learning. Barrington High School, located in a suburban setting about 35 miles northwest of Chicago, is one such school.

PEACE OF MIND

When it came time for Barrington to update their security system, school administrators had as their objective to not only provide peace of mind for students, staff, and faculty, but also to have the ability to identify sources of vandalism and theft. They realized that it could not only act as a deterrent, but could also provide critical evidence of incidents.

Barrington chose a Pelco video security solution that includes several DX8100 DVRs, Spectra dome cameras, Spectra Mini domes, over 100 Camclosures, and a System CM9760 video matrix. With close to 200 cameras positioned throughout the high school campus – inside and out – the upgraded security system helps provide a safe environment for everyone on campus.

“First and foremost, of course, is the safety of students. You really can’t put a price on the value of students and teachers or their safety and well being,” said Fred Zimmermann, Security Installation Manager for MidCo Inc., headquartered in Burr Ridge, Illinois, the integration company that designed and installed the Pelco system.

“We have a large building with over 40 exits, and the camera system allows us to monitor each of our doors and observe most of the hallways, view entrances, parking lots, and public meeting areas,” said Steve McWilliams, District Safety Coordinator and Associate Principal at Barrington. “It also helps to deter theft and vandalism.”

McWilliams said that campus attendants watch the cameras in a viewing room on 60-inch plasma monitors and on laptop computers equipped with a remote client. The video matrix switch allows for the flexibility of viewing images on the Internet. In addition, the school records the cameras to their extensive DVR system and has plans to install more cameras in areas they have identified as needing additional coverage.

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QUALITY PRODUCT & SERVICE

"The Pelco rep and dealer worked with us from the early planning stages. They took the time to walk the premises with me before drawing the plans, troubleshooting our issues, and matching the system to our needs," McWilliams said.

"MidCo checked in with me regularly to detail their progress and discuss any issues. After the installation, they even gave us access to one of their IT guys to help with training and customization of the system. It was a great relationship and they delivered and installed a quality product. And Mark McCormack (of Keith Parker & Associates Inc., Pelco Manufacturer Representative) was critical in making sure that we had the correct system for our needs. We selected Pelco because they had the best system at the best price," McWilliams said.

"Pelco has set industry standards for video security systems in performance, tech support, and maintenance," Zimmerman said. "The Pelco system at Barrington is state-of-the-art, and everyone involved with it is very satisfied."

UNFORESEEN BENEFITS

A residual benefit to safety has also been protection of student and school property. "As we have become more comfortable with the system, we are using it to its full potential," McWilliams said. "It has helped us to find missing purses and such, as well as identify the source of vandalism in a few instances."

Not only has the system fulfilled expectations, but it has also provided unforeseen benefits. "I would have never imagined the time and effort the system has saved. In the past, hours would have been lost investigating an incident that can be resolved in minutes now," McWilliams said.

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