

# Safety and Security

Build **BPS**



## Safety and Security

The district aims to provide access to quality schools in every area of the City. Part of what makes a quality school is safety. The community needs to have close-to-home options that provide both educational quality and personal safety.

Per discussions with school principals and others members of BPS, gang influence can affect daily operations at some schools, impacting attendance and behavior. If a student does not feel safe at school, it impairs their ability to learn, and will likely influence their choice in selecting which school to attend.

BPS, along with the Boston Police Department and community leaders, need to work together to rid the schools of gang influence and establish all schools as safe zones. For that to work, neighborhoods surrounding the schools need the same protection.

**Building Components for Safety and Security**—Safety includes building security. Keeping students warm, safe, and dry is a prerequisite for all schools.

Following are aspects of school building safety and security, not all of which can be addressed by the buildings themselves: Entry sequence, secure building perimeter, technology, safety personnel, and teacher and staff teamwork.

- Improve the entry sequence – How one enters a school building and who is admitted is most critical to this discussion. Not admitting or slowing down inappropriate persons allows first responders' time to arrive on scene.
  - Some high schools have security personnel at the front door conducting bag checks; certain others also have metal detectors
  - Most schools have main offices out of direct sight of the main entrance and rely on intercom/camera systems for determining building access. Some offices are around a corner, down a corridor, or on an upper floor preventing direct viewing of a person trying to gain access and impairing the main office's the ability to better judge that person's demeanor.
  - Review all schools to determine whether main offices can be relocated closer to the main entry, allowing for direct sight and control of the doors. Where that is not possible, explore whether satellite offices can be constructed with the same criteria.
- Minimizing the number of potential access points to a building is the contemporary approach to school design. Many BPS schools have a number of doors that need to be controlled and monitored.
- Security cameras, open-door detectors, automatic lockdown systems, and intercom systems are all standard components in modern schools. Many schools in Boston lack one or more of these systems; in some cases, they are not fully functional. Review all schools to determine whether technology systems are present and properly functioning. Upgrade or install new systems where appropriate.
- This study addressed neither teamwork between safety personnel and administrative staff & faculty, nor the influence of gangs. These operational issues play critical roles in the success of school safety and security.