

OPENING THE DOOR TO SCHOOL SAFETY



Modifying building codes to allow for door barricade devices might keep a gunman out of classrooms, but the unintended consequences associated with the devices could put children at even more risk and the school in liability. Yet, many states are seeking to change their codes under the false pretenses that door barricade devices are the only product that can secure a classroom.

UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

Although widely publicized, school shootings are very rare. In fact, nonfatal victimizations such as bullying and physical attacks by students are much more likely to occur. According to the National Center for Education, in 2012, students ages 12-18 were victims of more than 1.37 million nonfatal victimizations at school, including 615,600 thefts and 749,200 violent victimizations; 89,000 of which were serious violent victimizations.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the FBI, students, not outsiders, are the most likely people to commit violence on school grounds. Storing a barricade device in a classroom makes crimes easier to carry out. As seen in the school shootings at Virginia Tech, the West Nickel Mines schoolhouse and Platte Canyon High School, shooters often barricade themselves in a classroom with others to cause harm or take hostages.

DOOR SECURITY GUIDELINES

The National Association of State Fire Marshals guidelines address classroom door security & locking hardware. Classroom doors are required to meet Building, Fire, Life Safety and Accessibility Codes.

- Provide immediate one operation egress that does not require special knowledge or effort, nor key or tool.
- Be lockable and unlockable from outside the classroom.
- Be located between 34" and 48" above the floor and not require tight grasping, twisting, or pinching to operate.
- Be easily lockable in case of emergency from within the classroom without opening the door.

THE SOLUTION

There are a variety of door hardware companies that provide specifically designed classroom security locking functions that meet the code requirements. These locksets, which allow users to quickly lock the door from either side, meet code requirements for free egress, fire protection and accessibility. They are the fastest and safest solution for "lockdown" situations.

For further information/resources visit the Door Security & Safety Foundation website doorsecuritysafety.org

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