

# SECURITY BUSINESS

The Path to Greater Profits for Security Integrators

Vol. 44 No.6 • June 2022

Powered By

 SECURITY  
INFOWATCH.COM

## SPECIAL REPORT: CAMPUS SECURITY

As the nation recovers from another devastating elementary massacre, experts look at technologies and solutions as we move forward

Starts on Page 32

## INTEGRATOR M&A *HEATING UP*

Take a closer look at Pye-Barker Fire & Safety's expansion from fire services provider into security integrator, as well as other major M&A deals to kick off the summer

**YOU ASKED,  
WE LISTENED!**

**CX-ED1500 SERIES  
ELECTRIC STRIKES**

FOR MORTISE &  
CYLINDRICAL LOCKSETS



 **CAMDEN**  
DOOR CONTROLS

See Our Ad on Page 3



# Mobile Duress on Campus

Learn why incident response is a critical aspect of an effective school security plan, as well as best practices for deployment

**S**chools face many safety and security challenges – from medical and mental health emergencies and sports injuries; to altercations between students, and students and staff; to natural disasters, campus intruders and the rare but unfortunately real risk of active shooters.

With so many risks that require rapid communication between staff and internal/external responders, duress systems

become a critical aspect of a school and campus security plan. This exclusive technology roundtable sponsored by Inovonics takes a closer look at the technology in the school vertical, including benefits, installation tips and more from the experts who are deploying them.

## What role does mobile duress technology play in K-12 school campus security?

**Varvais:** The ability to include location-based duress alarms to a current [K-12 school security]

### The Panel:

**J.T. McNutt**, Director of Technology and Operations for Bluepoint Alert Solutions, a provider of a proprietary Rapid Emergency Response Systems (RERS)

**Matt Varvais**, Technical Program Manager at RFI Communications and Security

**Craig Dever**, Vice President of Sales and Marketing for sponsor manufacturer Inovonics

ecosystem gives the responding personnel a much more proactive approach on alarm response, while also reducing response time. With campus staff members and teachers already having so much to deal with, adding this technology provides an increased assurance and confidence in campus safety and getting help when needed. This can result in happier staff members and teachers – therefore increasing the ability for schools to retain teachers and staff members.

**McNutt:** Mobile duress technology can play a crucial role in bolstering safety and security in K-12 settings because it allows for immediate emergency notifications to be generated virtually anywhere on campus, regardless of a person's proximity to a fixed device. This capability is especially important to K-12 faculty, who frequently move around the building/campus throughout the course of the day, such as administrators, bus monitors, physical education teachers, SROs, etc.

**Dever:** Mobile duress technology gives school staff and teachers a discrete and simple way to call for help. This could be a call for help if a student or staff member had a medical emergency, if there was violent behavior that required the police response, or any other type of event requiring either an internal or external response. Additionally, a true life-safety quality mobile duress system is purpose built, always on and supervised, and simple to activate in an emergency.

**How important is precise location used in mobile duress for the efficient notification and response in any crisis situation?**

**Varvais:** Schools face many safety and security challenges. Just the common classroom altercation alone is difficult for teachers and staff, as they are still responsible for

“With so many variables, areas of risk can be different on many campuses. While mobile duress (or any other technology) cannot eliminate risk, it can certainly reduce it by improving response time.”

– **Matt Varvais, RFI Communications and Security**



the rest of their students while they deal with the challenge in front of them. Any improved response and ability to get more help as quick as possible in these scenarios is crucial.

**Dever:** In a crisis, the speed of response is often directly tied to responders knowing where the crisis is located. In a small school with a single main entrance, the precise location of a panic button activation may not be all that important; however, in a larger school with multiple floors, rooms, entrances, and/or buildings, the school resource officer and other responders need to know exactly where the crisis is occurring to respond appropriately.

**McNutt:** The ability to quickly determine and broadcast the location of a mobile device activation can be a very valuable feature in a K-12 setting. Many of the faculty/

staff who carry those devices are known to move about the building during the day, making it very difficult for first responders/support staff to pinpoint their location in the event of an activation. For example, a Phys Ed teacher could be in the gymnasium, locker room, office, athletic fields, weight room, or anywhere in between. Being able to eliminate the guesswork and obtain a precise location in that scenario can save valuable time in responding to an emergency.

**How can school districts leverage the physical security infrastructure they already have to support duress applications?**

**Varvais:** One of the major benefits of this mobile duress platform is the API platform, which allows the system to integrate with various other system types to receive alarms, and take additional action as the end-user wishes. This can range from activating a lockdown command upon duress activation, to changing reader operational modes, to dispatching law enforcement or EMS, etc.

**Dever:** The trick here is to have a cost-effective mobile duress addition that leverages their pre-existing security system investments. Mobile duress is an



“The ability to quickly determine and broadcast the location of a mobile device activation can be a valuable feature in a K-12 setting that can save time in responding to an emergency.”

– **J.T. McNutt, Bluepoint Alert Solutions**

important addition to any school system, but ideally leverages the technology and procedures already in place.

**McNutt:** Using mobile duress technology in conjunction with Rapid Emergency Response Systems such as BluePoint Alert can leverage other existing systems/solutions and multiply their effectiveness. For example, when a mobile duress activation occurs, if tied in to a BluePoint system, its location can be displayed on a floorplan that is sent to key individuals and responders via text messages. In addition, live camera feeds from the area where the activation occurred can be forwarded and viewed via mobile or desktop devices by those in authority or responding to the incident.

### What areas within a school campus pose the most risk, and how can mobile duress mitigate these risks?

**Varvais:** With so many variables – school type, age range, location, surrounding environments, etc. – areas of risk can be different within any campus. While mobile duress (or any other technology) cannot eliminate risk, it can certainly reduce it by improving the time of response.

**Dever:** It really could be anywhere, but that's the point – in order for schools to efficiently mitigate risk, a mobile duress addition to their system has to be able to scale. There can't be areas on the campus that aren't covered, these panic buttons need to work everywhere – from the most populated areas to the most private areas, help needs to be a button push away.

**McNutt:** In our work with K-12 professionals, it seems that the areas of highest risk for securi-

“ A mobile duress addition to [a school security] system has to be able to scale. There can't be areas on the campus that aren't covered, these panic buttons need to work everywhere.”

– Craig Dever, Inovonics



ty and medical emergencies are the areas where large groups of people frequently congregate or pass through (ie: primary corridors during passing periods, cafeteria during lunch hour, gymnasium during sporting events, main entrances during arrival and dismissal, etc.); also where athletic activities take place (ie: gymnasium, weight room, athletic fields, playgrounds, etc). Mobile duress can help mitigate the risks of security-related issues and medical emergencies in these spaces by giving faculty and staff the ability to instantly notify of an emergency with the press of the button, and then proceed to offer whatever support or care is needed until help arrives.

### How can school districts budget for these systems?

**Varvais:** Districts can work with their local integrators and consultants for rough pricing on this technology to budget for in the future. Additionally, there are often a number of different grant programs running at both the federal and state level to improve school safety and security that schools can apply for.

**McNutt:** In our experience, funding sources for such systems/technologies can include: federal/state grants, safety/security budget funds, inclusion in a bond package, or the utilization of CARES

Act or ESSER funds can free up dollars to be spent on safety/security projects, to name a few.

**Dever:** There are usually funding avenues based on regulatory changes like Alyssa's law, which works to address the issue of law enforcement response time when a life-threatening emergency occurs in a school.

All versions of Alyssa's Law include a duress system, and to date, Florida and New Jersey have enacted specific versions of Alyssa's Law, while legislation is pending in several other states. A federal version was introduced in 2019, but has not advanced through the legislature.

All versions of the law require a silent panic alarm system for staff and students that links directly to law enforcement, but the specifics can vary state to state. For example, the Arizona draft and New Jersey law stipulate the system must be installed by a security professional; however, this is not included in Florida. Regulatory standards like Alyssa's Law should be considered when budgeting mobile duress additions in districts.

To learn more about sponsoring company Inovonics, visit <https://wireless.inovonics.com/locationmatters> or request more information at [www.securityinfowatch.com/10213994](http://www.securityinfowatch.com/10213994).



# inovonics® Mobile Duress

Delivering precise room and floor **location** upon mobile duress pendant activation

Learn why an ineffectively deployed mobile duress system is nearly as dangerous as having no system at all.



A key component of physical security is the mobile duress system, which, when thoughtfully deployed, ensures help is just a button press away. However, the flip side is also true. An ineffectively deployed system can create a false sense of security and put lives at risk.

Learn more and download educational materials here:  
[wireless.inovonics.com/locationmatters](https://wireless.inovonics.com/locationmatters)