



DANIEL HAND HIGH SCHOOL

MADISON PUBLIC SCHOOLS SELECTS CAMPUS SHIELD™ TO SPEED UP EMERGENCY RESPONSE



INTRODUCTION

School districts nationwide are actively seeking ways to decrease the amount of time it takes first responders to mobilize a response to a campus emergency.

It is clear: the sooner first responders are on-scene, the better the outcome. This is as true for active shooter scenarios as it is for medical events or other campus emergencies.

Common solutions to this challenge are:

- On-site safety personnel and SROs
- Panic button systems
 - Smartphone apps
 - WiFi based systems
 - Radio Frequency (RF) based systems

This Case Study takes an in-depth look at why Madison Public Schools (MPS) chose the RF-based panic button system, Campus Shield™, to achieve a material reduction in response time to their campus emergencies.

"We selected Campus Shield™ because we found it addressed the main concerns we had with competitive systems: reliability and ease of activation. We now know that no matter where you are on campus, even under extreme duress, help is one press of a button away."

Tom Scarice, Superintendent
Madison Public Schools



"There are a few reasons we supported the Campus Shield™ implementation: the system does not use cell phones or WIFI networks, we found those technologies just too unreliable for a panic button platform; the one-touch PAL activation is superior under duress; and the reliability of the location information is better than most of the other systems we've seen."

Joseph Race, Captain
Madison Police Department





THE CHALLENGE

Balancing safety with the mission to educate and develop young people is one of the greatest challenges facing school administrators today. With that goal in mind, MPS regularly evaluates solutions that enhance their overall security plan. One priority had been personal duress or panic button systems. MPS did have some hard-wired panic buttons throughout the district but they were interested in upgrading to something better. Prior to learning about Campus Shield™, they had been unable to find a solution which met their specific requirements.

Phones and Phone Apps

Because of inconsistent cell coverage throughout the schools in the district, the limits of GPS locating functionality, and the considerable difficulty operating phones under duress, MPS refused to consider phone apps and smartphone-based systems.

WiFi systems

Wireless networks, in general, weren't designed to support life/safety technologies. Like mobile phones, their performance can be inconsistent. Madison was adamant: dependability and performance were non-negotiable, so WiFi-based systems were dismissed.

A School not a Fortress

One of the most effective ways to speed up the response to an emergency is to increase the number of trained security/police personnel on campus. However, this approach has significant long-term costs and limitations. Madison has multiple SROs patrolling the district already, so adding more was seen as cost prohibitive and likely to have a negative impact on their open, inclusive learning environment. MPS needed a solution at the ready in every corner of the campus 24/7.

"With Campus Shield™ installed, the entire Daniel Hand High School community feels safer."

Anthony "TJ" Salutari, Principal
Daniel Hand High School



THE SOLUTION

National Protective Systems, Inc (NPSI) manufactures, installs, and services Campus Shield™, the most reliable and effective panic button system on the market. MPS chose to be the first public school district in the country to install Campus Shield™ because it was the best fit for their unique needs and requirements. In fact, the performance and specifications of Campus Shield™ are so unique that MPS was able to procure the solution on a sole source basis.

Several things made Campus Shield™ the right choice for Madison:

- It operates on the same time-tested, rock solid technology first responders use to communicate: RF technology.
- It provides accurate location information without relying on GPS.
- It operates on its own network guaranteeing zero interference or impact on existing school or town networks.
- The handheld PAL (personal alarm locator) is easily and discretely activated with one press.
- It received support from their law enforcement partners at the Madison Police Department.

PEACE OF MIND THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT

During the summer of 2019, NPSI worked with MPS personnel to install Campus Shield™ at Daniel Hand High School and the police department in Madison. Today, all teachers and staff in that school carry PALs specifically assigned to them (120+ across all departments). If anyone, anywhere on that campus needs help, they simply press and hold their PAL for 1 – 2 seconds. Within several more seconds, receivers will pick up that 310 MHz signal, decode it and send it, via high-powered digital radio, to the Madison Police dispatch center over 3 miles away. At the head-end, dispatchers will know the identity of the person in distress, where they are on campus, and which of their 100+ surveillance cameras are in closest proximity to the alarm. If the person in distress moves to another location, the system will update and dispatchers will be able to pass that information along to officers in the field. There are no alarm dead zones. It works in the third-floor bathroom, deep in the West Parking Lot, and everywhere in between. The MPS community now feels more secure with Campus Shield™ in place. MPS plans to expand the system throughout the rest of the school district over time.