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IN-BUILDING WIRELESS NEEDS FOR EDUCATION

Education is forecasted to be the biggest industry vertical in public safety spend through 2024, with emergency communication becoming increasingly important for school facilities. Ironically, schools are often the most physically sound and safe structures in their communities but are troublesome for vital radio frequencies (RF) used by first responders in emergency situations. As Emergency Responder Communication Enhancement Systems (ERCES) for improving in-building connectivity are increasingly mandated in school districts across the country, we've provided the TL;DR on it's importance and how to secure the funds for implementation.

Why do I need in-building public safety communication systems?

State Requirements



Many Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) requires ERCES in schools.

Infrastructure



Schools are built like concrete fortresses, often doubling as storm shelters, but those building materials, such as concrete, metal and low emission glass negatively impact RF.

School Violence on the Rise



Of the 1,316 school shootings since 1970, 18% have taken place since the Sandy Hook shooting only 9 years ago. During these moments of crisis, first responders must be able to communicate in every area of the facility.



Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School: In the Marjory Stoneman Douglas school shooting in 2018, it was revealed that mobile radio communication was not seamless, leading to potential delays in the emergency response.

How does it get implemented?

Facility managers, school administrators and electrical contractors must work with a variety of stakeholders to properly implement public safety systems and understand the full extent of technology needed for seamless wireless coverage.

Virtual Antenna Mapping (VAM)



VAM is a useful tool that helps find the optimal location to place wireless antennas to deliver the ideal signal for emergency communications.

AHJ's



Meet with your AHJ to understand the unique requirements of your region for public safety wireless communication prior to purchasing an ERCES.

Systems Integrator



Work with experienced implementation partners. This will ensure a successful deployment since they understand the national fire codes and local AHJ requirements as well as the technology needed to efficiently build the network.

Life and Fire Safety Contractor



If your ERCES and fire safety systems can be implemented and integrated for cost and resource savings, work with the same companies responsible for installing fire alarms and smoke detector systems before mapping your fire safety deployment.

How do I pay for it?

American Rescue Plan (ARP)



The ARP was announced by the Biden Administration to mitigate the economic impact of COVID-19.

Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER)



ESSER funding can be allocated for the purchase of key resources necessary for the schools, including upgrading any out-of-date public safety equipment or developing new in-building systems.

Did you know that state Education Agencies apply and must allocate at least 90% as subgrants to Local Education Agencies including the state's school districts and charter schools?



Really? I also heard that K-12 schools can apply to their state in order to get ESSER funding for improvement of public safety technology.

Web www.adrftech.com

Tel +1 818.840.8131 Fax +1 818.840.8138

Technical/Customer Support +1 800.313.9345

3116 West Vanowen Street Burbank, CA 91505

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