INVESTMENTS IN SAFETY

Fulton County Schools is committed to providing safe and secure learning environments. The Fulton County School Board makes annual, ongoing investments that provide safety and security to our physical buildings and also has programs in place that focus on the social and emotional well-being of our students and staff.

These investments have steadily increased over the years, broadening the services and programs provided to all. In addition, the School Board recently pledged support for Superintendent Mike Looney’s commitment to safety by authorizing special funding to improve school safety processes.

School Police Officers and Safety Personnel
Fulton County Schools has one of the largest school police forces in Georgia. As one of only a few school police departments certified by the Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police, our sworn officers are ready to respond to any situation. A segment of specially trained officers are SWAT certified.

The Fulton County School Board and local school leaders also invest in additional non-sworn personnel called Campus Security Associates (CSAs). These personnel assist in securing schools and buildings throughout the district. CSAs receive annual training from the FCS Safety and Security Team and support local school leaders to further meet the safety needs of their communities.

Safety Training and Emergency Preparedness
School staff and school leaders receive annual safety training, which includes reviewing active shooter protocols, lockdown procedures and police notifications. District Health Services staff provide AED, CPR, and first aid training, and all clinic staff receive annual training regarding response protocols. Also, each school has a safety plan that is reviewed annually by school leadership and district safety staff and reported to the State of Georgia/Georgia Emergency Management Agency. School Board policy requires all schools to complete specialized safety drills, including those for evacuation, shelter-in-place, soft lockdown, and hard lockdown.

Video Surveillance Systems
Digital camera systems are in every school, allowing FCS Safety & Security and FCS Police teams to monitor activities in and around facilities with laser sharp accuracy via desktop computers, monitoring stations or mobile devices.

In addition, Fulton County Schools is partnering with municipal police agencies so that they have direct access to view school-based cameras and can coordinate a response with FCS Police during potential emergency situations.

Improvements and Upgrades on the Horizon
Past capital plans have included high-tech video camera system upgrades in schools and school buses, visitor ID management, safety planning and communication tools, patrol vehicles, and specialized equipment for FCS police officers.

Approved again by Fulton County voters in November 2021, the one-penny sales tax, ESPLOST, is funding Capital Plan 2027. CP 2027 is adding to these investments by replacing or updating safety components nearing the end of their life cycle, such as:

- Automated External Defibrillators
- Door keycard access for school staff
- Integration of door buzzer systems with new video surveillance systems
- Replacement IP cameras for existing video systems
- Updated equipment for school police officers, including ballistic vests and communication radios
- Replacement of emergency vehicles
- Safety and security window film
**Front Entry Controls/Visitor Identification Systems**
All Fulton County Schools are equipped with front door entry controls. After student arrival all exterior doors are locked, and visitors and students must be granted access by personnel in the front office. These devices are located at the entrance of every school and are equipped with cameras, intercoms to the front office, and a notification button. Visitors are required to push the button to ring the front office staff, who can view and question visitors via a video phone system, and then determine whether to unlock the front door for entry.

**Visitor Management System**
All schools are equipped with a visitor management system. Visitors register in the building at the time of arrival, and their information is checked against state/national sex offender databases.

**Front Entry Additions/Reconfigurations**
Several of our older high schools have received front entry additions that enhance safety, creating clear entry points for our community. The new atriums increase visibility and access control at the entrance of the school.

**School Police Fleet**
The FCS School Police has its own vehicle fleet, which not only provides greater visibility of our school police officers, but also increases their ability to patrol all schools and provide emergency response.

**Equipping Officers with Safety Gear**
School police officers have ballistic vests, communication radios and body cameras as part of their standard police uniform.

**Law Enforcement Communications**
FCS School Police participates in the nationwide FirstNet public safety broadband and cellular network. AT&T, in a public-private partnership with FirstNet, operates and maintains a highly secure wireless broadband communications network for Georgia’s public safety. With the power of priority and pre-emption, first responders no longer have to compete with non-emergency users for a connection and can reliably connect to the network for information needed.

**Bus Surveillance Systems**
All school buses in the Fulton County School System have received video surveillance system upgrades. Each bus is equipped with four video cameras, which provide surveillance of activities within the buses and can assist our team in investigating behaviors that affect student safety.

**S.H.A.R.E. Tip Line**
Safety concerns can be reported anonymously through the district’s S.H.A.R.E. tip line. S.H.A.R.E. stands for “See It. Hear It. And Report It Every Time.” All FCS-issued student devices are preloaded with the reporting tool, and the tip line also can be accessed through the FCS website and FCS mobile app. This gives students, staff, parents and the public an easy way to “see something, say something” while remaining anonymous.

**Electronic Emergency Response Protocols/Internal Communications**
Fulton County Schools uses a tool called CrisisGo to quickly distribute emergency operations plans to staff, via mobile devices, during emergency situations.

**Mass Communication/Notification Systems**
The school system uses Blackboard as its district-wide emergency communications tool. The tool can be used to notify parents of safety-related situations involving their students in a specific school, a geographic learning zone, or district-wide via phone call or email.