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THE GOLD STANDARD IN SCHOOL SAFETY

CASE STUDY

School District of South Milwaukee (WI) Boosts Safety, Improves Risk Management, Tracks and Confirms Contractor Billing with the Raptor® Visitor Management System

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOUTH MILWAUKEE (WI)

The School District of South Milwaukee, located immediately to the south of the city of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on the western shore of Lake Michigan, serves students in grades PK through 12

- 6 schools (4 elementary, 1 middle school, 1 high school): approximately 3,000 students
- 7,052 visitor sign-ins (2018-2019)
- 1 flagged sex offender

CHALLENGE

Like many school districts across the US, leaders in the School District of South Milwaukee, Wisconsin (SDSM), were shaken by the events that took place on Valentine's Day, 2018, at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. The incident, in which 17 students and staff members were killed and 17 others were injured, mobilized districts nationwide to rethink their approaches to campus security. In South Milwaukee, district officials had previously conducted a security survey and decided to revise their visitor management policy. The Parkland incident served to lend their efforts a heightened sense of urgency.

"Prior to the safety policy revision, the district was using paper-and-pencil sign-in logs," says SDSM Safety Program Manager Michael Goldmann. "Although notoriously unreliable, especially with no ID checks or vetting, that's exactly what nearly all school districts used to do, and many still do." Counting itself fortunate for not having experienced a bad incident because of an unwelcome visitor intrusion, the district modified its visitor protocols to have a more accurate picture of who was trying to gain access to its schools to help head off a dangerous presence before a problem could occur.

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>
> — *Michael Goldmann, Safety Program Manager, School District of South Milwaukee (WI)*

SOLUTION

As part of the security policy revision, SDSM partnered with Raptor Technologies® to modernize the district's approach to visitor management. The Raptor® Visitor Management system scans each school visitor's state-issued ID against sex offender databases in all 50 states as well as customized local databases, potentially listing custody bans, court orders, and other specific visitor bans. A positive match signals front office staff and alerts designated district personnel, who can intercept the intruder before he or she gains access to student or staff areas. The system prints a sticker badge for each visitor with a photo taken directly from the person's ID to indicate to building staff that the visitor has been screened and is allowed access to the facility. SDSM implemented the Raptor system in May 2018 at its high school, middle school, and district office. South Milwaukee's four elementary schools were added to the system in February 2019.

RESULTS

Since implementation of the Raptor system, SDSM has flagged one sex offender. "We've only identified one so far, but we know that that's likely not to be the last," says Goldmann. "We also had a student who was a witness in a court case, and the court ordered the adult defendant to have no contact with the student. We took advantage of the system's custom alerts feature to create a ban for the adult under the court order. We're confident that this feature will really help increase our level of campus safety."

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"It's hard to quantify what the Visitor Management system means to us," Goldmann says. "Raptor provides us with support for our safety protocols. It absolutely helps us enforce our visitor policies. It provides risk management protection for the district, and bottom line, it provides greater security to both our students and our staff members. Clearly, Raptor is a valuable system." Goldmann continues, "Raptor has features that we never intended on benefiting from, but we have benefited. The system helps us with business accounting, for instance, because we can confirm the actual presence of contractors on campus and compare that data to billing charges. The duress/panic button feature on the system dashboard is certainly a reassurance to our front office personnel. And frankly, we hadn't anticipated the value of local custom alerts, but they give us the ability to keep track of individuals who have a negative history with the district. Quantifying the value of this system and its features is difficult, but if Raptor helps us avert even one tragedy involving a student or staff member, then it's worth it. How do you place a value on human life?"

Goldmann concludes: "We're at the point as a nation where visitor management software is an essential component of a robust school security program. I consider Raptor to be a best practice."

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PROTECT EVERY CHILD, EVERY SCHOOL, EVERY DAY.

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