RAPTOR® TECHNOLOGIES

THE GOLD STANDARD IN SCHOOL SAFETY

CASE STUDY

Brighton (MI) Schools Reduces Reunification Time by 75% with Raptor® Emergency Management System

In the fall of 2016, Livingston County (MI) Emergency Planning and Response Director Therese Cremonte began meeting with various school districts in the county to develop and coordinate emergency plans to keep students and staff members safe in a range of possible crisis scenarios, from natural disasters, fires, and chemical spills to unauthorized persons on campus — including active shooters.

"We needed a blueprint for disaster . . . from emergency first response to human services," Cremonte says. "But what I really wanted was to pay attention to post-incident recovery." Since Columbine, Cremonte thinks law enforcement has improved its real-time incident response. But she thinks post-event recovery hasn't received enough focus.

> " What's most important when one of these incidents occurs is to quickly reunite students with those who love them most.
>
> *- Therese Cremonte, Livingston County (MI) Emergency Manager*

UNDERSTANDING THE INS AND OUTS

Emergency planners wanted to completely understand off-site parent-student reunification, from notification to student management and transport to accountability and panic control. They began in the spring of 2017 with a mock event at a local parochial school. Participants used paper rosters, checklists, and walkie-talkies for in-incident communications. And while pleased with the results, leaders understood that the modest drill simply didn't go far enough.

Christopher Parks, Brighton High School Resource Officer and member of the Brighton PD, participated in the first drill and knew planners needed to think bigger. "We had to scale up. Any real incident was going to involve more resources, more buildings, more students, and more parents — with more potential for confusion. So I wanted a much bigger drill in March 2018."

Planners attended a seminar featuring the Raptor Technologies® Emergency Management system. The Raptor system integrates drill management, active incident response, and rapid reunification management in a single user-friendly mobile application. Observers loved what they saw and invited Raptor to take part in Brighton's upcoming active shooter drill.

RAPTOR VERSUS PAPER-AND-PENCIL

More than 240 participants, including students and their parents, took part, along with school staff, police, fire, EMS, and media. After Officer Parks initiated the incident in the Raptor app, first responders attended to "injured" students, cleared classrooms, and guided "uninjured" students to a designated transport area, where they were bussed to the off-site reunification area. Parents were notified, and the critical reunification process was performed — twice.

The first reunification was done using the Raptor system, which communicated the status of every student and staff member in real time, instantly confirmed authorized parents or guardians, and allowed for real-time monitoring of incident status by the leaders in the command center. Every student was reunited with an approved guardian in less than 20 minutes.

The second reunification was conducted with paper-and-pencil forms and walkie-talkie communications, requiring messaging to occur consecutively rather than simultaneously, and introducing the real possibility of identification and record-keeping errors. It took nearly an hour and a half to reunify the same parents and students.

Brighton officials were sold. They began implementing the Raptor system district-wide in the fall of 2018.

SPEED, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND ACCURACY

"The advantages of the Raptor® system over standard paper-and-pencil processing were obvious," said Parks. "Simultaneous communications and the ability to give multiple incident leaders updated status reports in an instant — the ability to monitor status without a lot of confusing chatter — plus the accountability: we knew where resources were needed, and the app freed personnel to be shifted appropriately. And of course, the command center could see it all."

"The fact that parents could see incident leaders tracking their kids on their phones or tablets in the app *in real time* meant that they knew things were under control," said Cremonte. "It really calmed parents' nerves."

"Raptor enabled us to see who was being transported and when. Paper-and-pencil tracking lags and creates uncertainty," said Parks. "With Raptor, everything was so much faster."

Cremonte and Parks also pointed out that using Raptor meant that incident response itself was quicker and easier. Set-up was almost instantaneous — there was no need to distribute clipboards with rosters, copies of emergency plans, and site maps.

"Our EMS commander was impressed by the app — knowing which kids were injured, where they were, their unique medical information," said Parks. He even acknowledged the advantages of the features that the emergency planners didn't use: "The drill management function, which enables administrators to keep their campuses prepared, is just a really smart thing."

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With Raptor, [reunification] was so much faster.

- Resource Officer Christopher Parks, Brighton (MI) High School

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PROTECT EVERY CHILD,
EVERY SCHOOL,
EVERY DAY.

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