

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES College Security Survey Results

Background

Based on the State Board's interest in learning more about campus safety preparedness, the System Office sent a survey to the community colleges on December 18th. The survey focused on four major areas of emergency preparedness: scope of planning, the methods of providing security and communications, the equipment used, and funding issues. Fifty-three community colleges completed the survey.

Scope of Planning

The survey asked colleges about topics addressed in colleges' security plans. The most common topics include:

1. Bomb threats/suspicious items and severe weather were tied for first place, with 52 colleges reporting.
2. Fire and violent behavior/active shooter scenarios were tied for second place, with 51 colleges reporting.
3. Medical emergencies were covered in the plans of 50 colleges.

Of the categories suggested in the survey, earthquake was the least likely to be included in a plan, with 26 colleges responding. Respondents most often said that their greatest threat was an attack by a person on campus, and many of those responses involved domestic violence. The location of some colleges made severe weather their greatest threat.

Twenty-one colleges responded that they perform drills to test their procedures and systems four or more times annually. Another sixteen do so at least twice annually, and nine said that they rarely, if ever, perform drills.

Methods of providing security and communications

Over half of the colleges contract with a third party to provide security services. Just under half employ non-sworn security personnel, and twenty colleges have their own campus police agency. One college does not currently provide security. Three-fourths of the respondents said that their security personnel are all armed or that all who are authorized by law are armed. A dozen colleges said that none of their security personnel are armed.

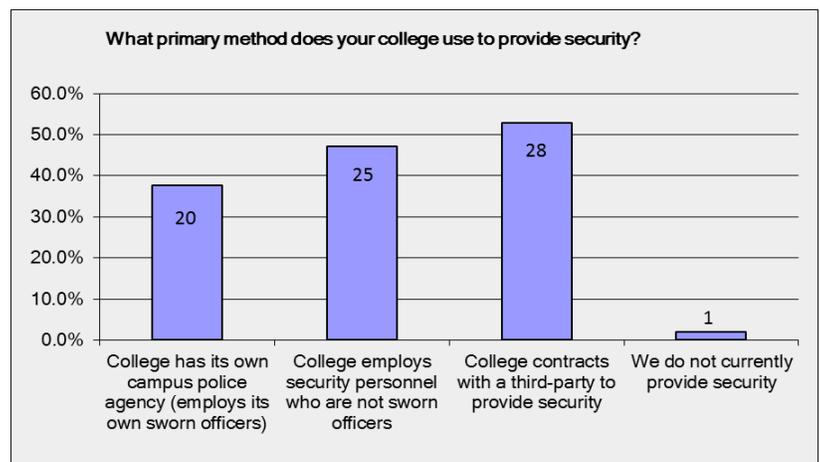


Figure 1 -- Primary methods of security provision at responding colleges

Of the colleges who contract their security, most skipped the survey question about with whom they contract. However, eight responded that they use their local sheriff’s office, five use their municipal police department, and three use a private vendor.

Four out of five colleges said that they are satisfied with their security services. All but one said that they have a good relationship with their local emergency responders; the remaining respondent was unsure or had no opinion.

The most popular methods of communicating emergencies employees and students were e-mail and text, with almost fifty colleges using these techniques. At least half of the respondents said that their college uses social media, an alarm system, intercom, and voicemail. Only about one in three colleges uses “pop-up” messages on connected computers.

Equipment used

Fixed cameras remain the most widely used security equipment, as almost nine out of ten colleges use them. Only nineteen colleges use motion-activated cameras. Almost half of the respondents reported using call boxes, outdoor sirens, indoor panic buttons, and card access locks for doors. Almost every respondent that said their institution is not currently using card access locks said that they are currently considering using them. It was the most popular equipment under consideration, followed by indoor panic buttons and call boxes. Almost two thirds of the respondents believe that their equipment is inadequate.

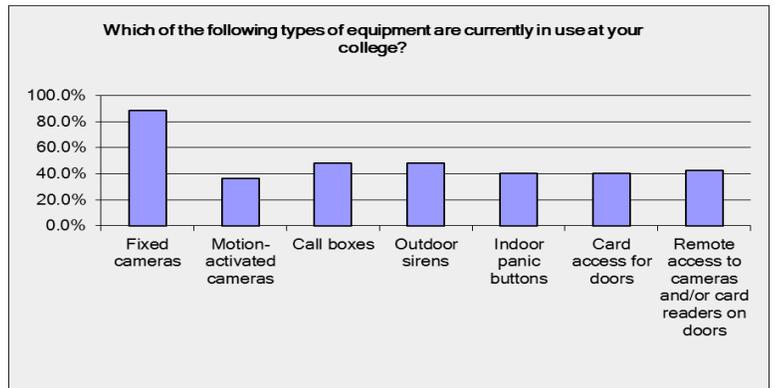


Figure 2 -- Types of equipment typically in use at responding colleges

Funding issues

The vast majority of the respondents preferred greater flexibility in using state funds for security, with only three unsure or having no opinion, and only one opposed to the use of state funds for security at their college.

When asked about the greatest unfunded need for security funding, respondents most commonly described equipment needs. The second most common theme was communication methods, and the least mentioned was staff and training needs.

Contact

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