



Eaton County Public School Uses Rave Panic Button to Rapidly Respond to Weapon on Campus

The challenge

The principal of an Eaton County, MI school wasn't in his office when a gym teacher told him the news: a student was spotted skipping class and leaving the school campus. What made this particularly concerning was that one of the student's classmates reported that he had spotted a weapon in his backpack earlier.

The principal needed to immediately notify 9-1-1 and tell his staff to go into lockdown mode. However, he wasn't in his office, where the school's PA system was located. When a second couldn't be wasted, how could the principal alert the school of the weapon on campus and contact 9-1-1?



Customer

Eaton County, MI, is 579 square miles with more than 108,000 residents across 43,908 households and 2,092 businesses.

Challenges Solved

9-1-1 Response, Critical Communication, Incident Collaboration, Mass Notification, Safety & Protection

Solutions

- Rave Panic Button

The solution

Like many school districts in Eaton County, this school was using the Rave Panic Button app. This mobile app, installed on staff members' phones, provided them with the ability to respond by pushing the app's buttons to call 9-1-1 and report incidents such as a fire, medical emergency, or active shooter as well as send a mass notification to key personnel.

The principal of the school was able to use the Rave Panic Button app to take immediate action. He pushed the app's police button to contact 9-1-1, instead of selecting the active shooter button, because he knew the response to each situation would be drastically different.

Because the school had provided 9-1-1 with a segmented list of contacts, every teacher, staff member and security personnel on the dedicated list were instantly notified of the emergency. Promptly providing info makes a rapid and cohesive response possible, whether it's initiating a lockdown, ordering an evacuation, or just notifying staff about a planned upcoming drill.

Just as importantly, the Rave Panic Button's Staff Assist feature allowed for inter-staff communication as well. Unlike a PA system, which would broadcast the lockdown out loud to the entire school, the Rave Panic Button app provided the principal with the ability to discreetly notify staff about the situation and advise them on next steps and safety procedures.

Even though the principal wasn't in his office, he was able to advise his staff that the school was entering lockdown mode. He could also communicate important factors that were unique to the situation. For instance, because the principal knew that the student with the weapon had gone outside, he could tell his staff to monitor building entry points in case the student tried to re-enter the building.

"It was remarkable how quick the response was with Rave Panic Button. Not only was the school able to immediately go into lockdown, but 9-1-1 and first responders could easily get all the information needed for a speedy response."

Robert Stahelin, 9-1-1 Supervisor, Eaton County, Michigan





The result

When the Rave Panic Button activation call came into Eaton County 9-1-1, Supervisor Robert Stahelin, was able to swiftly take action by drawing on both the capabilities of Rave Panic Button and past school collaboration initiatives.

Stahelin's team could easily share details with first responders who were en route to the scene, such as the school's floor plans, description of the suspected student, and information about the direction he was last seen traveling. This equipped responding officers to quickly find and apprehend the student. Rave Panic Button's Quicksend feature made it easy for the principal to notify school personnel who were in lockdown that the student was found, de-armed and no longer a threat to the school.

This swift response was due in part to Stahelin holding training sessions with the school's administrative staff, showing them how to use the Rave Panic Button app to report an incident. In addition, he also showed them what emergency response looked like from the dispatchers position, so that staff members could understand what information they should provide to the public service answering point (PSAP) in order to leverage the system.

"One of the key things to our response was the Rave Panic Button demonstration," the school's principal said. "It gave me an idea of what information 9-1-1 needs and how to use the app to speed up the response process. That really resonated with me, and really made me feel more comfortable with Rave Panic Button while better understanding the benefits of it as well."

Initiatives like this didn't just make emergency response easier for the school's staff. It also freed up call takers by eliminating one of the biggest hindrances to emergency response: constant calls to 9-1-1 by parents, teachers and students trying to find out information.

"It's unusual during events like this that PSAPs don't receive an increase in calls and questions," Stahelin said. "In this event, we didn't receive any of those calls, which is ideal because we're busy handling an emergency. That tells us that we were providing enough info to those that needed it, and they didn't need to call and ask questions. I don't know if we've ever had an event of this nature without at least some calls."

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