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2024 Campus Safety Glass Security and Safety Survey

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Glass Window and Door Security: A Growing Concern for Campus Protection Pros

More than one in two campus protection professionals now say their glass doors and windows are the security systems most likely to fail during an unauthorized intrusion.

By Robin Hattersley

Glass doors and windows are a growing security concern for K-12 schools, school districts, institutions of higher education, and healthcare facilities, according to the 2024 *Campus Safety Glass Security and Safety Survey*.

More than half (51%) of this year's nearly 300 survey respondents believe their glass doors and windows are the perimeter security systems that would most likely fail and allow an intruder to gain unauthorized access to their campus. That's eight percentage points more than two years ago when *Campus Safety* conducted its **previous survey on this topic**. (See *Figure 1 on page 3*.)

When survey participants were asked to rate the ability of their glass windows and doors to protect people and property, the level of confidence this year also decreased

FIGURE 1

When thinking about an unwanted intruder gaining unauthorized access from the outside, which building perimeter security system is the most likely to fail on your campus?

	2022	2024
Security cameras	9%	9%
Doors and locks	36%	25%
Glass doors and windows	43%	51%
Emergency response personnel	4%	6%
Other - Write In	9%	10%

FIGURE 2

On a scale from 1–5, with one being “not confident at all” and five being “highly confident,” please rate your confidence level in the ability of your campus(es)’ glass windows and doors to protect people and property against the following threats:

	2022	2024
Forced entry with a blunt object (crowbar, bat, brick, rock, etc.)	2.6	2.5
Terrorist attack (bomb blast, etc.)	1.9	1.8
Firearm, handgun, etc.	2.1	1.9
Natural disaster (hurricane, tornado, earthquake, etc.)	2.7	1.6

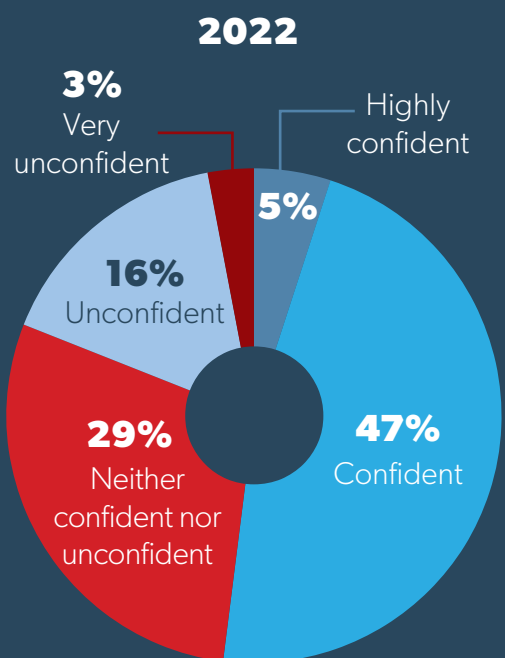
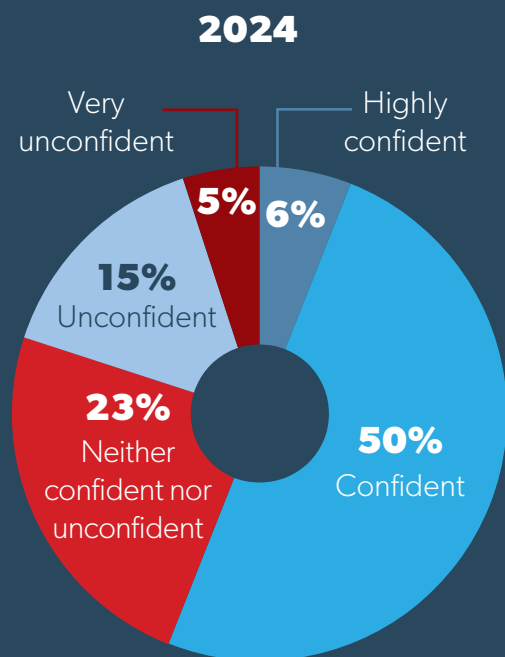
compared to two years ago. On a scale from 1-5, with one being “not confident at all” and five being “highly confident,” of their glass openings’ ability to protect against forced entry with an object, the average rating this year was 2.5. In 2022, it was 2.6. (See Figure 2 above.)

For natural disasters, respondents gave a confidence rating of 2.6. Two years ago, it was 2.7. For firearms and handguns, it is now 1.9, which is nearly a 10% decrease from the 2.1 confidence rating two years ago.

Like in 2022, respondents are the least confident in their glass openings’ ability to provide protection should there be an attack involving a bomb blast. What’s more, survey participants are even less confident than two years ago with a rating today of only 1.8. In 2022, the rating was 1.9.

Although there is growing concern among campus protection professionals about their glass windows and doors, there appears to be less of a concern about the ability of their facilities’ doors and locks to keep out unauthorized visitors. Eleven percent fewer respondents this year believe their doors and locks would be the systems that would most likely fail during an intruder event (25% now compared to 36% two years ago).

FIGURE 3 How do you feel about your current building perimeter security measures?



Interestingly, one in ten participants listed “other” as the building perimeter measure that is most likely to fail. Most of those who marked “other” indicated it would be staff, students, or contractors propping open a door or tailgating that would lead to a perimeter breach.

Confidence in Building Perimeter Security Is Up... a Little

Despite respondents’ growing concerns about glass window and door security, the overall confidence in their current building perimeter security measures is slightly higher than in 2022. Two years ago, 52% were highly confident or confident in their building perimeter security measures, compared to 56% today. *(See Figure 3 on this page.)*

Specifically, 6% of all 2024 respondents feel highly confident and 50% feel confident about their campus perimeter security measures. However, there is quite a bit of variation in responses when the sectors are broken out. Survey takers from single K-12 campuses are the most confident with their perimeter security: 11% are highly confident and another 63% are confident. Respondents from school districts with multiple campuses are a bit less confident at 3% and 61%, respectively, followed by participants from schools on college campuses (15% and 39% respectively).

Survey participants from institutions of higher education are much less confident than their K-12 brethren in their perimeter security, with only 6% being highly confident and 40% being confident. The difference in K-12 and higher education responses is understandable considering most college and university campuses are open,

compared to schools, which usually are smaller and enclosed by fences, gates, and locked doors.

Concerns Over Police Response Times Persist

Recently, there has been a significant push for schools to have either law enforcement or security officers (armed or unarmed) onsite. For example, Texas requires all of its public schools to have armed security officers or police on campus.

It's not surprising then that 65% of this year's survey participants said all or some of their buildings have security personnel, which is eight percentage points more than two years ago (57%). (See Figure 4 below.)

When the results are broken down by sector, however, there are, again, some significant differences. Sixty-nine percent of school respondents overall said all (37%) or some (32%) of their buildings have security personnel deployed in them. School districts with multiple campuses are the most likely to have security personnel patrolling all (40%) or some (35%) of their buildings, compared to single K-12 campuses (34% and 29% respectively).

FIGURE 4 How do you feel about your current building perimeter security measures?

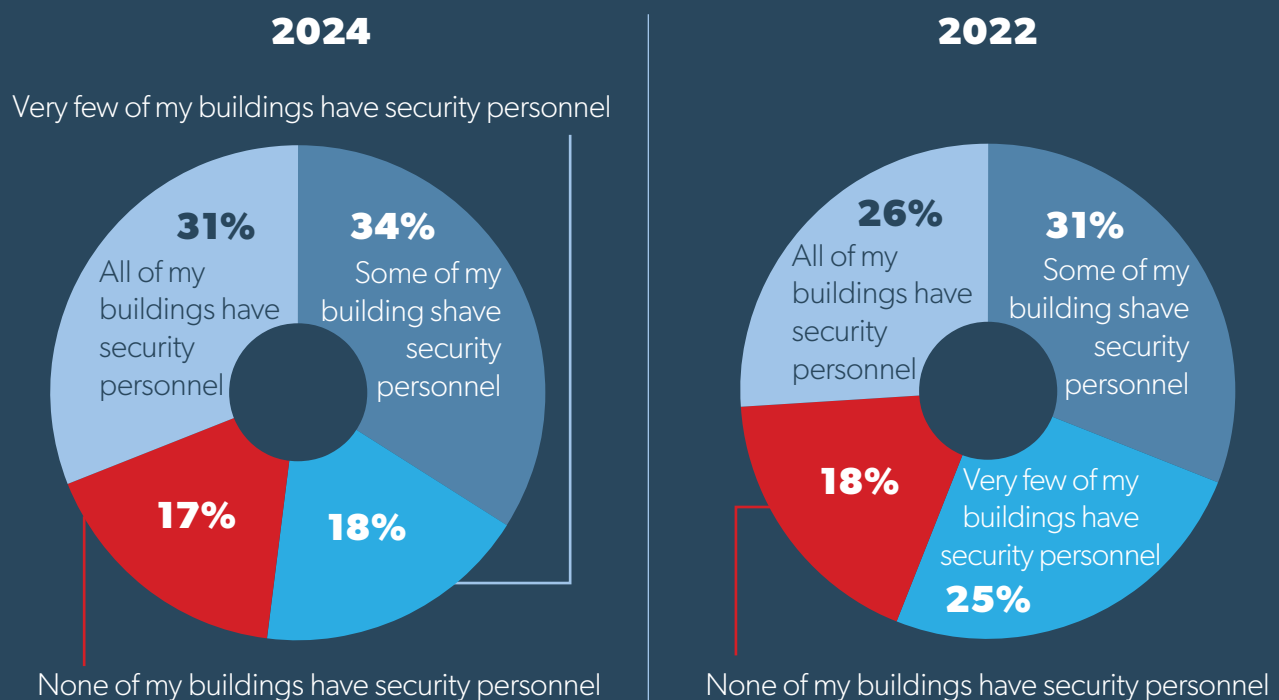
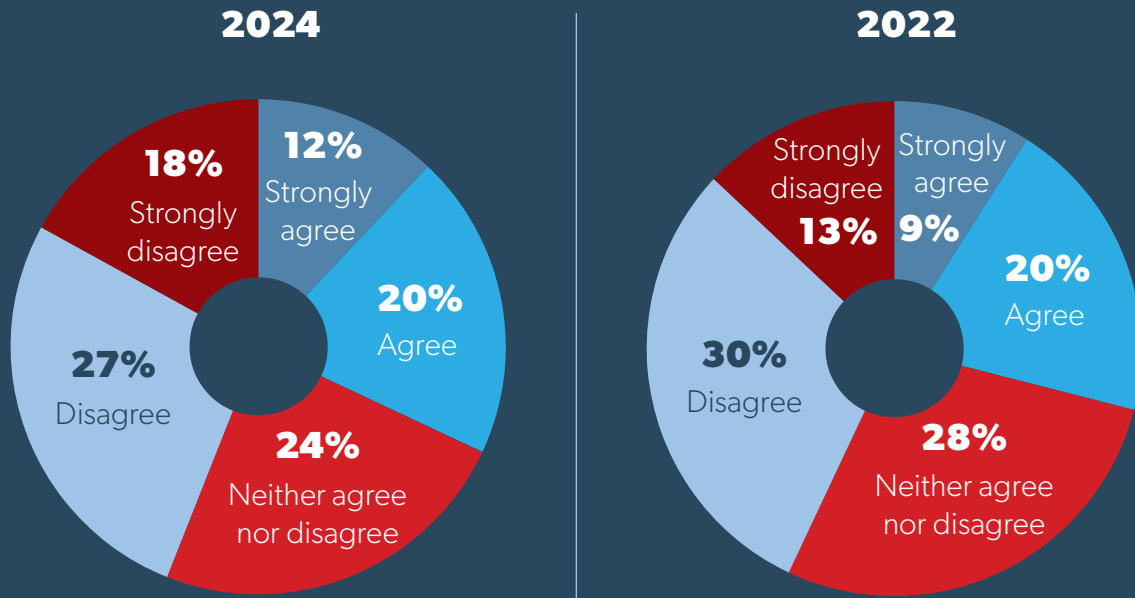


FIGURE 5 First responders and/or law enforcement will arrive quickly enough to the scene to prevent an intruder from gaining access through glass.



Just over half (53%) of institutions of higher education have security personnel deployed in all (23%) or some (30%) of their buildings on campus.

(It's also important to note that the survey didn't ask when or for how long security staff members are present. Buildings often only have security patrols at certain times of the day or evening.)

Concerns over local law enforcement response times is often one reason why campuses have opted for onsite security officers. Keeping this in mind, this year's survey again asked participants if they agreed or disagreed with the statement, "First responders and/or law enforcement will arrive quickly enough to the scene to prevent an intruder from gaining access through glass."

Overall, the confidence in law enforcement's response times appears to be practically the same today as two years ago. Forty-five percent of this year's survey participants disagree or strongly disagree with the above statement. That said, on the opposite end of the response spectrum, about one in three of this year's survey takers (32%) agree

or strongly agree that law enforcement will arrive quickly enough to the scene of an intruder incident. (See Figure 5 on page 6.)

Campuses Experiencing Fewer Incidents Involving Glass Window or Door Breakage

The 2024 survey once again asked participants about the motives of unauthorized visitors trying to get inside campus buildings. Seven percent more respondents this year said they are unsure why most perpetrators try to gain unauthorized access (25% today compared to 18% in 2022). Additionally, vandalism/burglary is no longer considered by campus protection professionals to be as popular of a motive for intruders, dropping from 40% two years ago to 27% now. (See Figure 6 below.)

“Interpersonal gripe, conflict, or revenge” is now considered the most common motive of intruders for 27% of this year’s respondents, compared to 21% in 2022.

Homelessness was the motive written in the most by survey respondents who said “other.”

FIGURE 6 What is the most common motive of a perpetrator attempting to gain unauthorized access to your buildings?

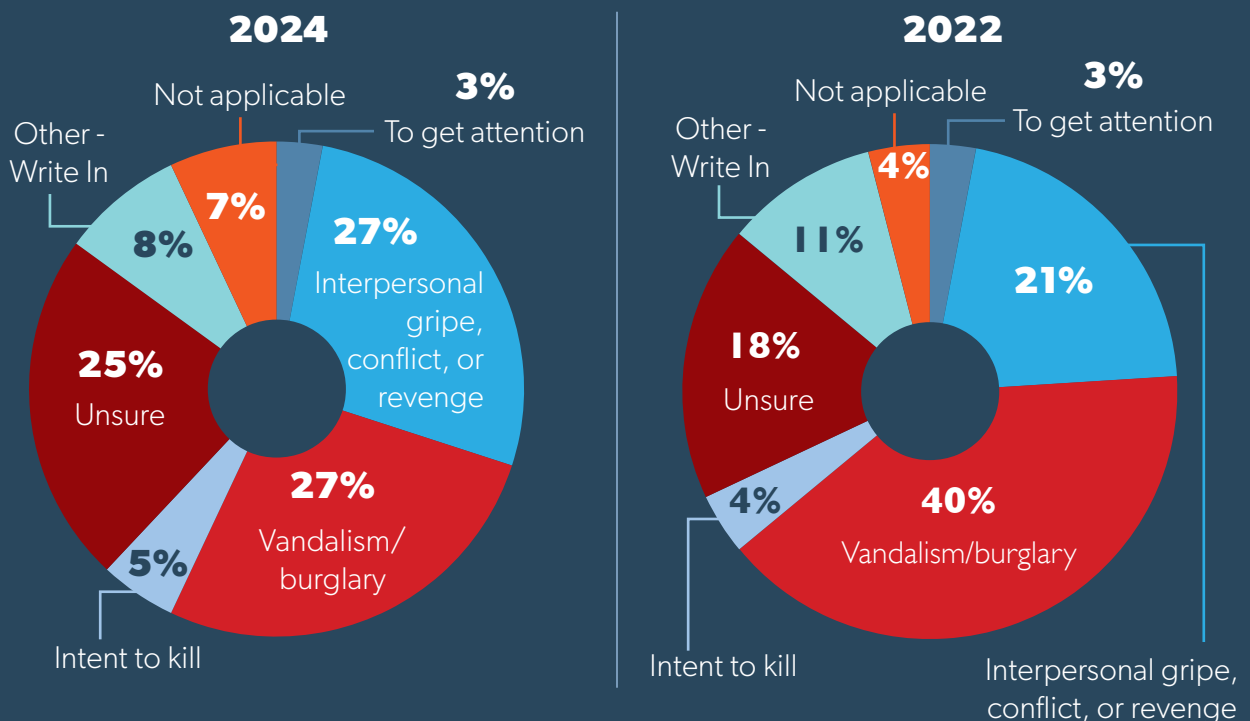
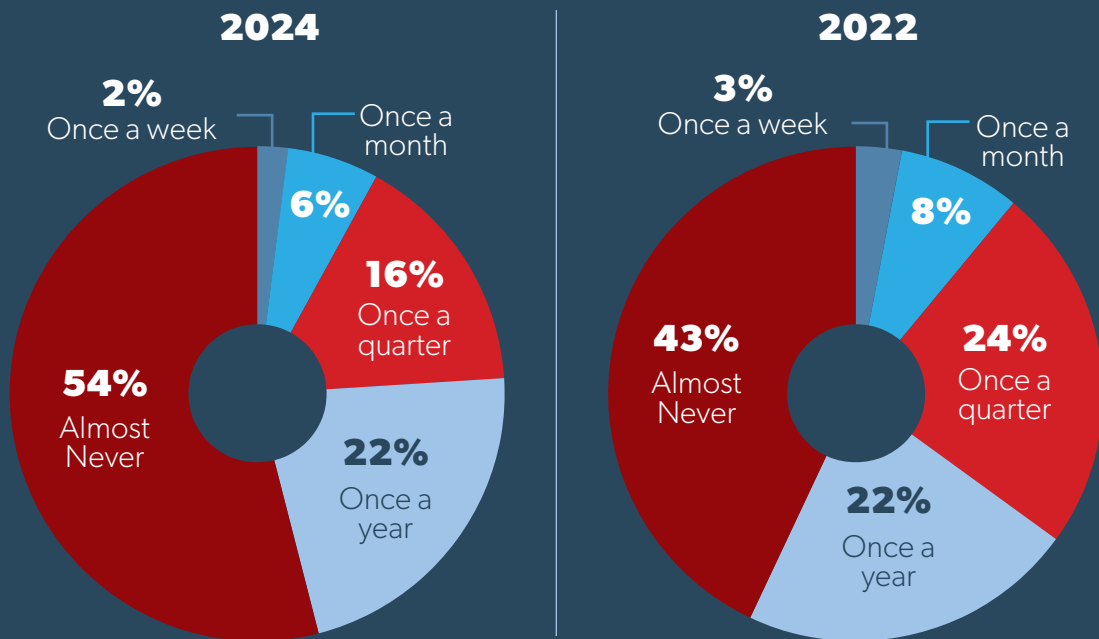


FIGURE 7 On average, glass windows and/or doors in my buildings are broken:



Despite the motives for unauthorized access continuing to run the gamut, campuses are now experiencing fewer incidents involving broken glass windows and/or doors than they did in 2022. Now, more than half (54%) almost never experience glass breakage, compared to 43% two years ago. That’s an 11% drop. *(See Figure 7 above.)*

However, when broken down by organization type, only 43% of higher education survey takers said their buildings almost never have broken glass windows or doors, compared to 55% of all K-12 respondents and 53% of healthcare respondents.

When comparing school districts with standalone K-12 schools, 74% of district survey takers said they almost never experience glass breakage, while only 46% of participants from standalone schools marked “almost never” in their response to the question on broken glass doors and windows.

It’s also important to note that overall, nearly one in four respondents (24%) said the glass windows or doors in their buildings are broken at least once a quarter, if not more. Although that figure is concerning, it’s much better than the 35% who experienced glass breakage at least once a quarter two years ago.

FIGURE 8

On a scale of 1-5, with one being “very unlikely” and five being “highly likely,” please rank the possible causes of glass breakage.

	2022	2024
Natural disaster (hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, etc.)	2.9	2.7
Bomb blast	2.5	2.5
Blunt object	3.4	3.3
Gun	3.1	2.6
Vandalism/civil unrest	3.4	3.2
Other	2.6	2.6

The most likely cause of glass breakage on campus is now “blunt objects” at 3.3 (when rated on a scale of 1-5, with one being “very unlikely” and five being “highly likely.”) In 2022, it was rated 3.4.

“Vandalism/civil unrest” is the second most likely cause at 3.2, followed by “natural disasters” at 2.7, and “guns” and other causes at 2.6 each. *(See Figure 8 on this page.)*

Interestingly, the perceived likelihood of guns being the cause of glass breakage dropped the most, from 3.1 in 2022 to 2.6 this year, which is a 16% decrease.

At 2.5, “bomb blasts” are believed to be the least likely cause of glass breakage on campus.

Protection Pros Less Worried About Natural Disasters, Energy Efficiency

Glass windows and doors don’t just pose security challenges. Mother Nature — in the form of hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes and more — is also a significant safety risk for campuses. As previously mentioned, according to this year’s survey participants, the likelihood of this type of incident causing glass breakage is 2.7.

Despite the risk, overall, there appears to be less of a concern about protecting people and property on campus from natural disasters. Although more than half of respondents (55%) still either agree (38%) or strongly agree (17%) with the statement, “Protecting people and property from natural disasters is a growing area of concern for building perimeter security and safety for my organization,” that’s eight percentage points less than in 2022 when 63% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. *(See Figure 9 on page 10.)*

Among this year’s survey participants, natural disaster protection is more important for colleges, universities, and healthcare facilities. Fifty-nine percent said they agree or strongly agree with this statement, compared to only 51% of all K-12 respondents.

Building energy efficiency, aesthetics, and occupant comfort are also less of a priority for this year’s participants compared to two years ago. (See Figure 10 on page 11.)

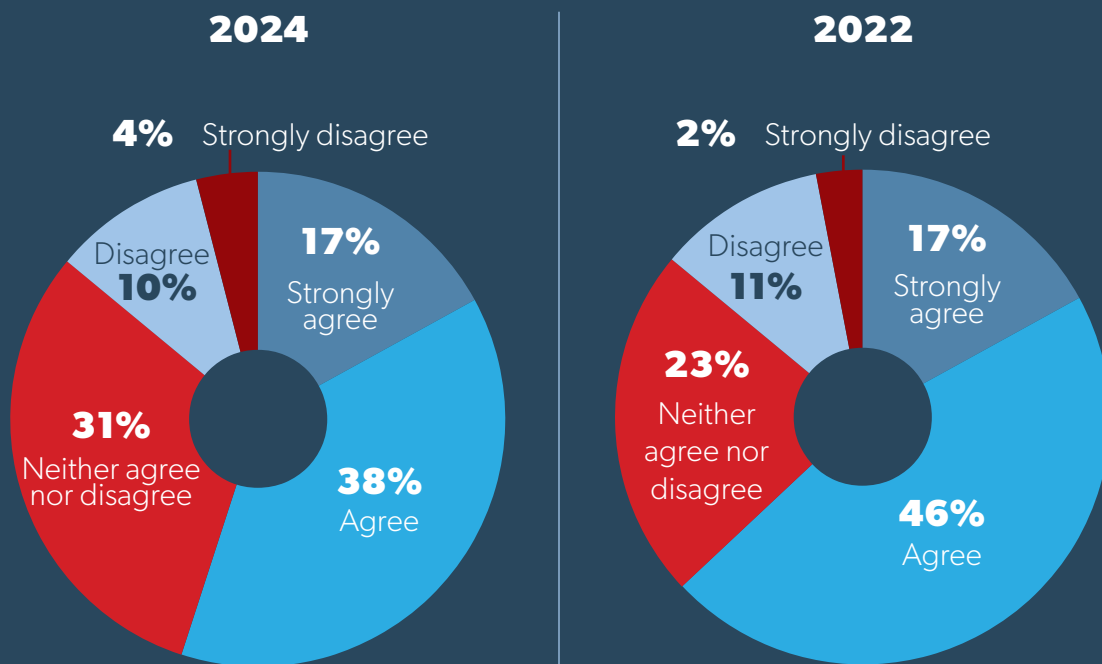
On a scale from 1 to 5, with one being “not important at all” and five being “very important,” the perceived importance of energy efficiency dropped the most, from 3.5 in 2022 to 3.2 today. The importance of occupant comfort dropped slightly from 3.9 to 3.8, while building aesthetics dropped from 3.6 two years ago to 3.5 today.

Motivations for Glass Window and Door Security Upgrades Vary

When asked about the type of safety film or glazing security solutions on their glass windows and doors, 47% of all respondents said they either don’t have security glazing on the glass windows and doors of their buildings or they are unsure what’s installed. (See Figure 11 on page 11.)

When the results are broken down by sector, 43% of K-12 school and district respondents said they have no security glazing or are unsure. Although 43% is nothing

FIGURE 9 Protecting people and property from natural disasters (hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, etc.) is a growing area of concern for building perimeter security and safety for my organization.



to write home about, it's better than the 51% of college and university survey participants who said they have no glazing or are unsure.

For the respondents that have made improvements to their facilities' window security and safety, 40% said their motivation was, "Nothing in particular. We just want to improve safety and security on campus." (See Figure 12 on page 12.)

Additionally, more than one in three (35%) said, "Recent incident(s) that happened in other parts of the country" was a motive for upgrades. It should be noted, however, that at 46%, K-12 school and school district respondents marked this option much more frequently than survey participants from higher education and healthcare. Only 24% of respondents from colleges, universities, and healthcare marked this option as a motive.

Forty-five percent of all survey participants said glass security became much more important to them after the March 27, 2023, Covenant School mass shooting in Nashville, Tennessee. Another 23% said it became somewhat more important. (See Figure 13 on page 13.)

Understandably, when the data is broken down by campus type, the impact of the Covenant mass shooting has been much greater for schools and school districts, with 55% saying glass security became much more important for them after that

FIGURE 10

On a scale of 1–5, with one being “not important at all” and five being “very important,” how important are the additional benefits listed below to you when evaluating, purchasing, or implementing a building perimeter security product?

	2022	2024
Building energy efficiency	3.5	3.2
Building aesthetics	3.6	3.5
Occupant comfort	3.9	3.8

FIGURE 11

The majority (51% or more) of glass windows and doors on my buildings are:

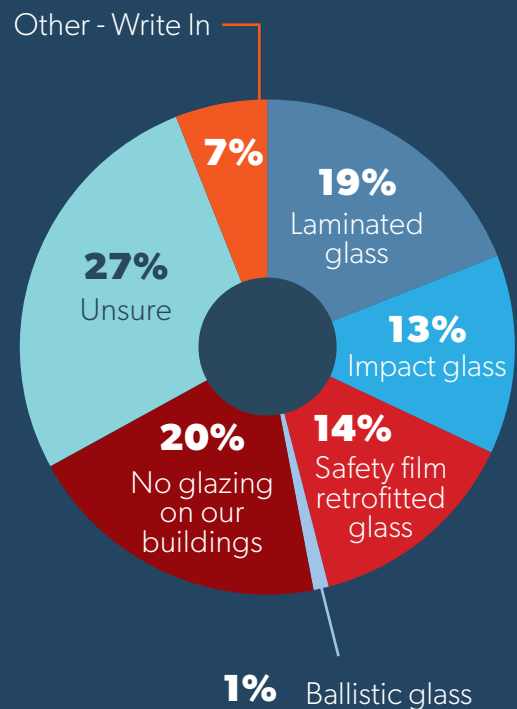


FIGURE 12

On a scale of 1–5, with one being “very unlikely” and five being “highly likely,” please rank the possible causes of glass breakage.

Recent incident(s) that occurred on my campus or at my institution.	8%
Recent incident(s) that happened near my campus.	14%
Recent incident(s) that happened in other parts of the country.	35%
Legislation or regulations that require us to install window safety/security film.	4%
Nothing in particular. We just want to improve safety and security on campus.	40%
N/A - We believe our windows are safe and secure.	8%
N/A - We need to bolster our window safety and security, but we are not taking steps to do so.	20%
Other - Write In (Required)	10%

event, compared to only 33% of higher ed participants.

Although 31% of all participants said the importance of glass security didn’t change after the Covenant event, there was a significant difference between K-12 and college responses. Only 23% of schools and school district participants marked this option, compared to 37% of survey takers from institutions of higher education and healthcare.

Fourteen percent of all participants said, “Recent incident(s) that happened near my campus” prompted them to bolster window security, and 8% said “Recent incident(s) that occurred on my campus or at my institution” was their motivation.

Sadly, one in five survey takers (20%) said “We need to bolster our window safety and security, but we are not taking steps to do so.” When broken down by campus type, K-12 schools and districts are better at only 15%, compared to higher education and healthcare at 26%.

Legislation and regulations requiring the installation of window security and safety solutions was a motivation for only 4% of respondents.

Federal, State, and Local Standards Influence Campus Window, Door Security the Most

At 62%, recommendations and best practices for glass security in “federal, state, and local laws” hold the most weight with schools, institutions of higher education, and healthcare facilities. However, at 72%, more colleges, universities, and healthcare facilities look to these laws than K-12 respondents (58%).

The Federal Commission on School Safety was cited by 45% of respondents (50% of

K-12 survey participants and 37% of higher education and healthcare respondents), followed by the Sandy Hook Advisory Commission at 29% and Partnership Alliance for School Safety (PASS) at 28%.

When broken down by sector, 35% of K-12 participants said PASS guidelines have influence, compared to only 23% of higher education respondents. More than one in three school and school district survey takers (34%) said the Sandy Hook Advisory Commission’s recommendations hold weight for them, compared to 22% of college and university respondents.

Fifteen percent of all respondents said the Federal Commission on School Safety, the Sandy Hook Advisory Commission, PASS, and federal, state, or local laws DO NOT influence them when considering and/or implementing glazing security standards.

Manufacturer advice, building codes, NFPA, UL, assessments, and consultants were written in as other persons or organizations’ recommendations or codes that influence this year’s survey takers.

Campus Safety thanks the 292 campus protection professionals who participated in this survey. We truly appreciate it!



FIGURE 13

The perpetrator in the March 27, 2023 Covenant School mass shooting in Nashville, Tennessee gained access to the building in seconds by shooting through the glass door. How did this change the importance of glass security to you?

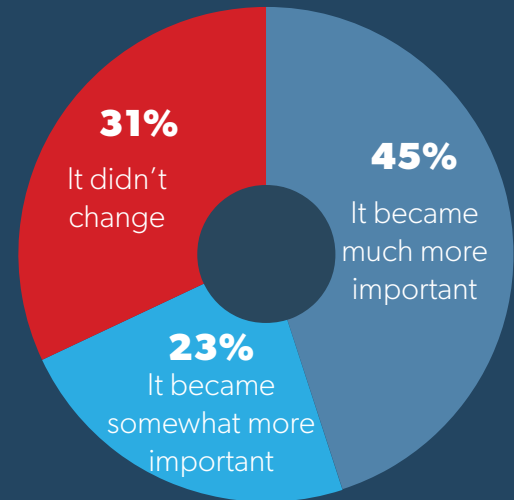


FIGURE 14

The organizations listed below have published recommendations and best practices for glass security on schools and campuses. Which organization’s standards hold weight when considering and/or implementing glazing security standards? (Check all that apply).

The Federal Commission on School Safety	45%
The Sandy Hook Advisory Commission	29%
Partnership Alliance for School Safety (PASS)	28%
Federal, State, or Local laws	62%
None of the above	15%
Other	7%

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