

# Are Your Campus Keys Secure?

Key control is an essential component of a school's security program. When keys fall into the wrong hands, schools risk not only loss of assets but lives as well. This is clear from several missing-key incidents that have happened in recent years.



- In Massachusetts, police were investigating a bomb threat at Newburyport High School when they discovered that a 16-year-old (who was not connected to the threat) was carrying a school master key and butterfly knife.<sup>1</sup>
- A missing set of master keys forced an entire school district in Oregon to rekey 16 schools, costing approximately \$50,000.<sup>2</sup>
- At the University of Central Arkansas, the chief of staff lent his grand master key to a student, who used the key to enter an assistant director's office and steal exam answers.<sup>3</sup>

When it comes to school security, electronic key control provides two key benefits: restricting access to keys and automatically documenting an audit trail of key usage.

By managing keys with an electronic key control system that controls user access, schools can cut down on incidents in which keys are either lost or end up in the hands of unauthorized individuals. If an incident does occur, the audit trail created by an electronic key control system can help police and school officials quickly identify who last checked out a specific key or set of keys.

<sup>1</sup> "Police probe threat to Newburyport High," Newburyport News, 2014 • [http://www.newburyportnews.com/news/local\\_news/article\\_86486328-c996-5b77-8103-137d80b5a907.html](http://www.newburyportnews.com/news/local_news/article_86486328-c996-5b77-8103-137d80b5a907.html)

<sup>2</sup> "Stolen master keys force Salem-Keizer schools to re-key," Statesman Journal, 2014 • <http://www.statesmanjournal.com/story/news/2014/10/10/salem-keizer-schools-forced-to-re-key-after-master-keys-get-stolen/17058521/>

<sup>3</sup> "Ex-UCA chief of staff charged with burglary," Arkansas Online, 2012 • <http://m.arkansasonline.com/news/2012/oct/05/ex-uca-chief-staff-charged-burglary/>



## Brief

## Tips for Keeping Your School Safe With Electronic Key Control:

### Store Keys Securely

Office drawers, pegboards and unmonitored lockboxes are all methods for storing your school's keys. The problem with those methods is that keys could be easily stolen by anyone who gains access to the area in which they are contained. Storing keys in a tamper-proof electronic key management system will greatly reduce the chance for key theft and enhance the overall security of your keys.

### Establish Access Levels for Users

Establishing access levels ensures that users can only take keys that are essential to their job functions. Enforce access levels by implementing an electronic key security system that requires users to enter a unique password or scan their fingerprint to retrieve keys. This nonreplicable access information ensures that only authorized users can check out certain keys.



### Keep an Accurate Log

One of the pitfalls of using a pegboard or lockbox is that if employees don't sign out or sign in the keys they use, locating unaccounted-for keys and updating the log becomes an administrative headache and, even worse, a liability for the campus. An electronic key control system provides an automatic verifiable audit trail of key activity so logs are always accurate.

### Set Up Alerts

With manual key control processes, there's no way to know if a key hasn't been returned, or if an unauthorized user attempts to access a key. Text message and email alerts can immediately notify system administrators when keys have not been returned or a user attempts to take a key to which they don't have access.

### About KeyTrak

Since 1987, KeyTrak's electronic key and asset management systems have helped businesses worldwide enhance the security of their operations while improving productivity and reducing costs. We believe the difference is in the details, which is why we take single-source responsibility for all our products. To ensure we're able to meet our customers' needs, we perform all our research and development, programming, manufacturing and support in-house at our headquarters in College Station, TX.



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