



**CENTEGIX**<sup>TM</sup>  
EVERY. SECOND. MATTERS.

## Spring 2022 School Safety Trends

June 2022

### *A Note from CENTEGIX*

We finalized this report in the days after the Uvalde, Texas school shooting. There have been 28 mass casualty shootings in schools across the country this year, and all of them are tragic. Our collective thoughts and prayers go out to all of those impacted by these events.

In this report, we confirm that the vast majority – 98% – of CrisisAlert usage is for the everyday emergencies that happen in schools; the remaining 2% of incidents are Campus-Wide alerts. Our CrisisAlert solution is specifically designed to notify everyone in the event of a Campus-Wide threat. To access our resource guide for selecting emergency notification systems, please click [here](#).

## Key Takeaways

In this report, we'll deliver our latest, comprehensive analysis of school safety incidents gathered from our CrisisAlert usage data. We'll also examine survey feedback<sup>6</sup> from staff who have used the platform to extract insights into school safety, including its role in teacher retention and recruitment. Highlights include:

1. Providing safety and security solutions for teachers and staff is **important for teacher retention and recruitment**.
2. The rate of safety incidents continues to trend upwards, and **elementary schools continue to be the highest users**.
3. **Almost half of all safety incidents occur outside the classroom**.
4. **Teachers prefer the badge to call for help** as opposed to traditional options like wall-mounted panic buttons or mobile phones.
5. **Discretion is crucial for de-escalation**, which traditional safety alert options can't provide.
6. **CrisisAlert has 100% adoption**; the badge is easiest to use.

## Overview

As the 2021-2022 school year comes to a close, school districts nationwide are facing challenges on many fronts: the long-term impacts of the COVID pandemic, teacher retention and recruitment, and an increase in school violence, particularly incidents directed at teachers<sup>1</sup>.

*"Education and law enforcement experts say the increased violence in schools was actually expected, given how traumatic the past 18 months has been for many school children. The effects of having to attend school remotely, not being able to meet or see friends, and watching parents lose jobs and money have all contributed to a student body that is more stressed and on edge. In some cases, students have also lost loved ones to the pandemic."<sup>2</sup>*

*"People are afraid to go to school...They're afraid to walk home from school. Teachers themselves don't feel safe. It's not a safe environment when you don't know what's going to happen."<sup>3</sup>*

These challenges aren't new; they persist in school districts of all sizes despite concerted efforts on many levels. The need to create a positive school environment and culture where students can learn and thrive and teachers feel safe, supported, and empowered is more important than ever. A "basic condition related to teacher turnover is safety and discipline: teacher turnover is more common in schools that have poor safety and little discipline."<sup>4</sup> As districts compete for qualified educators, the importance of meeting this basic condition becomes even more apparent.

*"Teacher-directed violence has often been overlooked in the research on school violence, but recent literature has demonstrated that violence directed against teachers is a significant issue that can affect teacher retention and recruitment...[It] often refers to a range of actions directed towards teachers that break school rules and negatively affect the school environment [that] include both forms of physical violence, such as assault and weapon use, and nonphysical forms of violence, such as threats, damage to property, and verbal abuse."<sup>5</sup>*

Even as the news headlines regularly focus on extreme safety incidents on school campuses, our data continues to support that everyday safety incidents, such as behavior and medical emergencies, are continuing to increase and represent the vast majority of CrisisAlert usage.

In this report, we'll deliver our latest, comprehensive analysis of school safety incidents gathered from our CrisisAlert usage data. We'll also examine survey feedback<sup>6</sup> from staff who have used the platform to extract insights into school safety, including its role in teacher retention and recruitment.

1. Providing safety and security solutions for teachers and staff is **important for teacher retention and recruitment**.
2. The rate of safety incidents continues to trend upwards, and **elementary schools continue to be the highest users**.
3. **Almost half of all safety incidents occur outside the classroom**.
4. **Teachers prefer the badge to call for help** as opposed to traditional options like wall-mounted panic buttons or mobile phones.
5. **Discretion is crucial for de-escalation**, which traditional safety alert options can't provide.
6. **CrisisAlert has 100% adoption**; the badge is easiest to use.

## 1. What does this mean for educators and school districts?

Schools across the country are seeing teacher shortages, and education leaders understand the importance of recruiting and retaining qualified teachers. Ensuring they feel safe and supported in the event of an emergency is a vital component of teacher retention and recruitment. Dr. Roderick “Rocky” Sams, Chief Development Officer, CENTEGIX and a former teacher and principal, noted this is a trend affecting schools nationwide, **“Nobody is immune to this. In the current climate, school leaders must create an environment in which teachers feel safe. If you can’t guarantee their safety, they can’t effectively teach. That can determine whether they stay or go.”**

Foremost among the needs of teachers is the expectation that they work in a safe, supported environment in which they know they can get help when they need it. While no classroom or school district can be considered immune from incidents—be they safety-related, medical issues, or otherwise—the data shows that it is paramount that districts implement tools and processes centered on ensuring teachers feel secure.

This has driven demand for solutions like CrisisAlert, from CENTEGIX, an innovative solution that equips teachers and staff with the fastest and easiest way to call for help in emergencies from the everyday to the extreme. CrisisAlert is unique in its ability to deliver precise alert location, immediate audio and visual incident notifications (including lighted strobes, screen messages, and intercom integration) for campus-wide incidents, and 100% full campus coverage. With the simple push of a button on a wearable badge, an alert instantly reaches administrators and responders.

Jay Floyd, Superintendent of Hart County Charter System (GA), underscored the importance of supporting teachers, **“Our teachers are using [CrisisAlert] with fidelity, and they are proud that they have safety and security in their hands. That means a lot to our community when they hear teachers talk about security. And so that allows our school board to know and our community know that we’re serious about safety and security, and we have plans in place.”**

CrisisAlert user survey data indicates very high satisfaction levels with the wearable CrisisAlert badge. Staff members who used their badge rated their experience as follows:

- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
| ➤ How easy was it to use the badge?                  | 4.92 out of 5 |
| ➤ Do you feel safer and supported as a staff member? | 4.6 out of 5  |

Feedback from users in these surveys indicates that the badge is the easiest solution to use to call for help in a crisis and that having the badge contributes to peace of mind so they can focus on teaching. The badge is also an effective tool for de-escalation.

*"I like having the security of **knowing that I can get help immediately**. It was very quick and I appreciate that."* - Middle school teacher (FL)

*"Since my Centegix badge was on my person, **I didn't have to leave the students to call for help**. I hit my badge and continued dealing with the situation."* - Middle school teacher (TX)

*"**This is the best safety measure I have had access to in the 16 years I have taught**. I truly love how this system works, from the ease of use to the information that automatically goes out to the school to let us know what is happening. This makes me feel much more secure and safe."* - High school teacher (GA)

## CrisisAlert Usage at an All-Time High

Our data on school safety originates from the CrisisAlert usage patterns of our education customers. The CrisisAlert platform has now delivered over 100,000 alerts since its inception. In the Spring 2022<sup>7</sup> semester, staff and campus-wide alerts increased 20% over the Fall, with over 12,000 alerts for staff and campus-wide emergencies. More than 4,800 staff members—an all-time high—initiated these alerts, on average 2.4 times each. Staff alerts, used for everyday emergencies such as medical and behavior incidents, continue to represent 98% of all alerts. Similar to Fall 2021, campus-wide emergencies such as weather incidents and lockdowns continue to represent a very small percent of CrisisAlert usage.

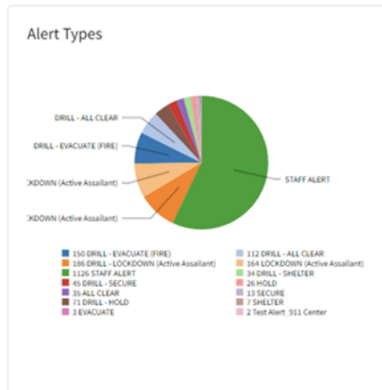
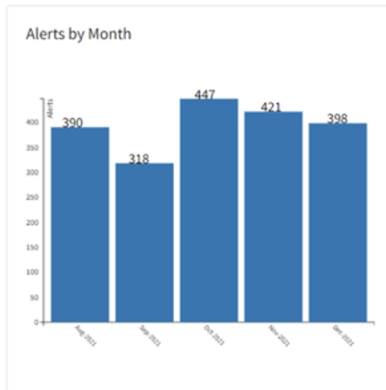
CrisisAlert customers have immediate and easy access to their district's data via the CrisisAlert Dashboard. This data is available on a school and district-wide basis and enables administration to make resource allocation decisions related to school safety.

The CrisisAlert Dashboard equips district administration with actionable data to

understand how to best support their schools. This contributes to an improved school culture and climate that further supports teacher recruitment and retention efforts.

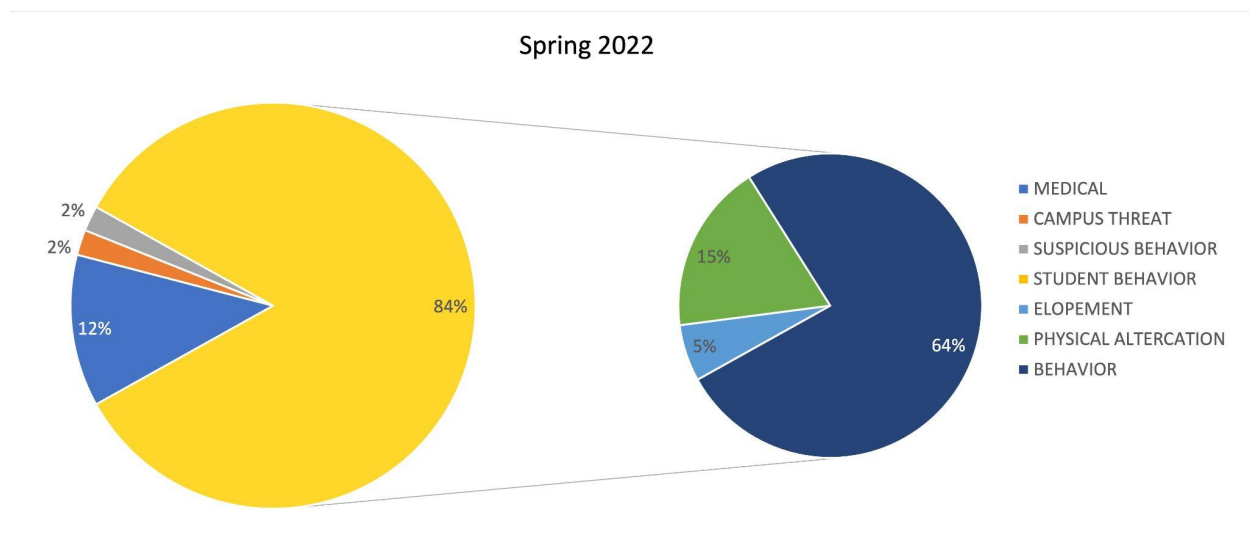
SAMPLE DATA on a CrisisAlert Dashboard:

Alerts Report for All District Sites



## 2. The rate of safety incidents continues to trend upwards.

Student behavior incidents account for 84% of alerts.



In the CrisisAlert platform, school administration indicates a “close reason” for each alert that provides data about the types of incidents happening in their schools.

Early in Fall 2021, districts requested a new reason code to track elopement, also commonly referred to as a “runner.” This is a behavior that schools are experiencing with increasing frequency. In Spring 2022, elopement accounts for 5% of all incidents, a stabilized trend from Fall 2021.

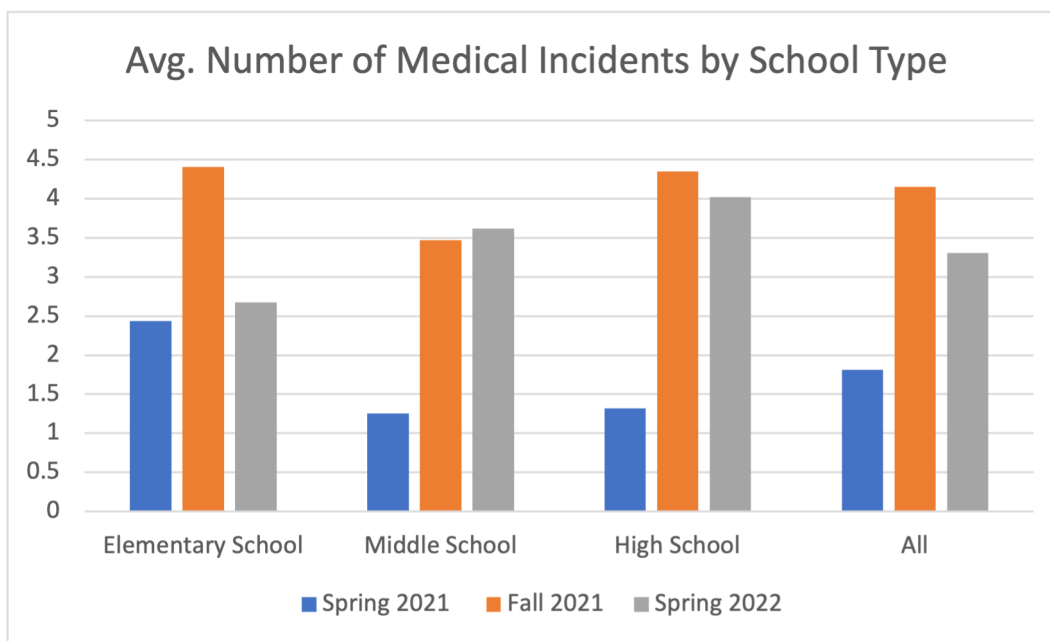
In Fall 2021, districts requested a new reason code to track general behavior issues. This new “behavior” code was in addition to the existing “physical altercation” option. In Fall 2021, the combined behavior categories (behavior, elopement, and physical altercation) represented 75% of all alerts. In Spring 2022, we saw that percentage rise to 84%. A contributing factor to this rise may have been the change in the overall number of alerts for medical emergencies, but this data point ultimately supports the trend of increased behavior incidents in schools.

Campus-wide alerts (weather events, lock-in/lock-down) were steady at a very low percentage of all alerts (2%), a stabilized trend we’ve seen since Fall 2020



## Medical incidents continue to represent a large portion of alerts.

Medical incidents continue to represent a sizable portion of CrisisAlert usage in Spring 2022, with the overall average number of incidents comparable to Fall 2021. Feedback received from staff also supports that the CrisisAlert platform is used in medical emergencies for both students and staff.



## CrisisAlert Helps Save Lives

In medical incidents, it's critically important to get help quickly and to the right location. Often, the speed of response is the difference between life and death. Such was the case at Dunbar High School in Lee County School District (FL), **where a teacher saved the life of one of her students**. Learn more via the school district's coverage of this powerful story via [video](#).

***"My student would have died or been severely brain damaged without the badge." - High school teacher (FL)***

See what staff had to say about CrisisAlert:

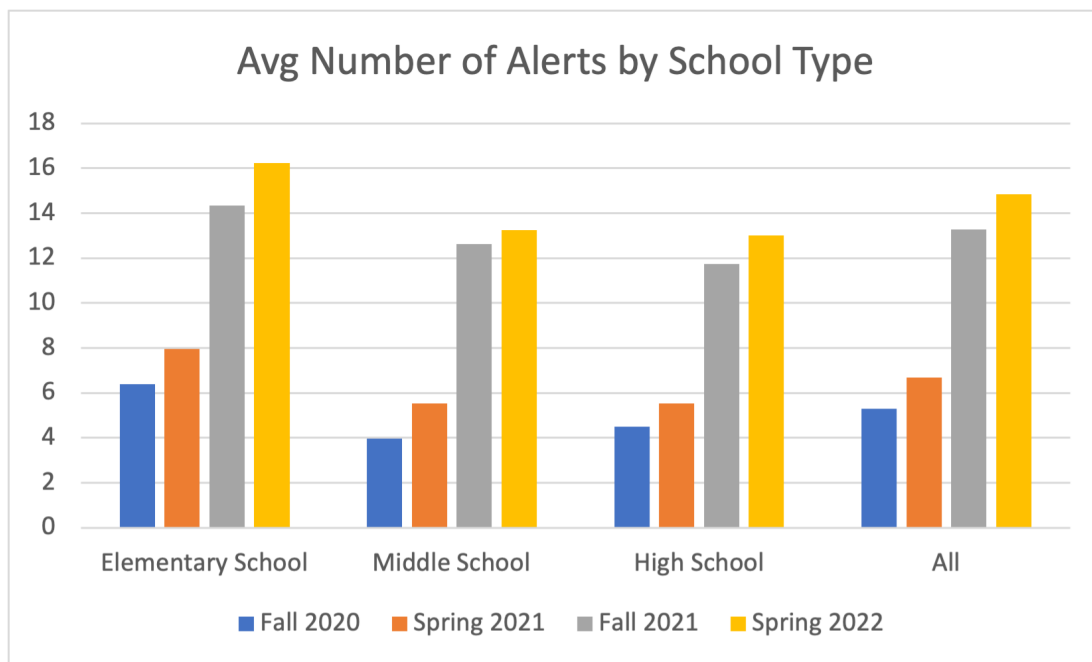
*"It was such a fast response time which I was not expecting. If I had called for help, it would have taken much longer for someone to get down to me, but since I used the badge, **it took less than a minute from when the student fell to her being taken to the office to get first aid.**" - Charter school teacher (FL)*

*"Any teacher with a child who has seizures -**three pushes and your hands are free** to help assist the child." - Elementary school teacher (IN)*

*"It was very helpful because I was with all of my students at the restroom after PE and my student had a bad reaction and **I couldn't leave the students or that student unattended.**" - Elementary school teacher (MS)*

*"My coworker had gone across the hall to cover for another teacher. She returned quickly due to lack of air in the room. When faced with hot conditions it triggers her asthma. She had an asthma attack. We tried using her inhaler twice, but she still could not breathe. So I pressed the badge three times to alert the school personnel that I needed assistance in my room. **Centegix was very easy to use, and I did not have to wait long before someone came to my room.**" - High school teacher (TX)*

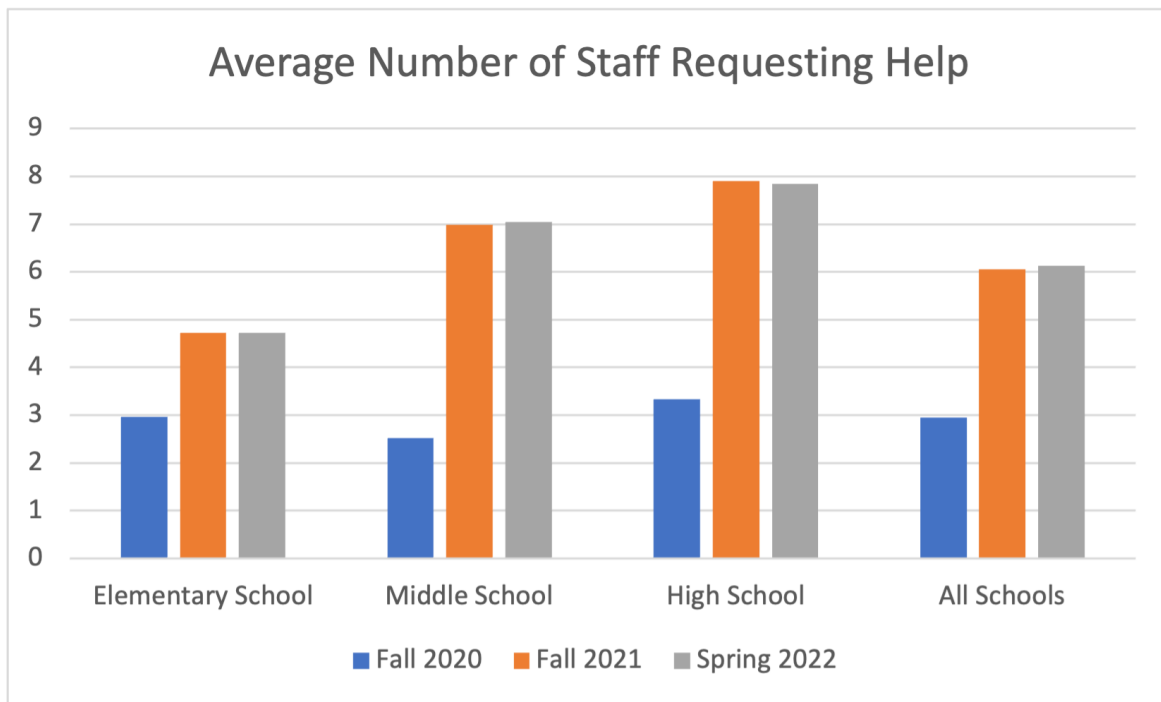
Overall, safety incidents remain elevated.



In Fall 2021, schools averaged 13.3 alerts per semester, which was a large increase over the previous semester. In Spring 2022, the data shows similar figures, with all school types seeing a slight increase, indicating trends are overall starting to stabilize. In Spring 2022, schools averaged 14.8 alerts per semester.

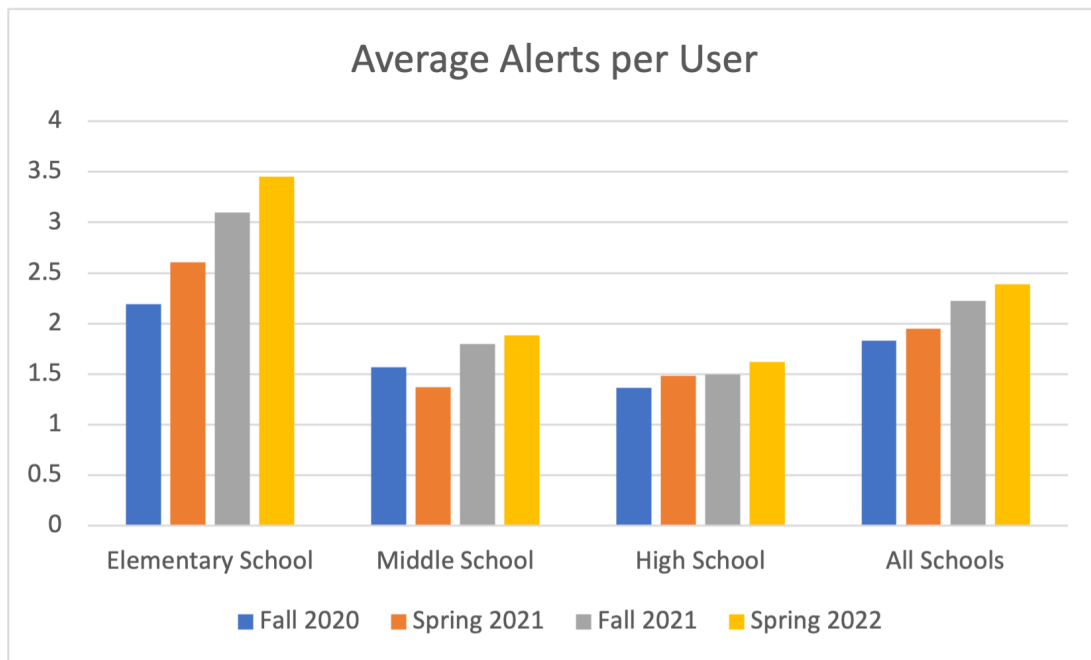
**Elementary schools continue to experience the highest rate of alerts on average out of all school types, averaging 16.2 alerts per semester.**

The number of staff requesting help remained consistent.



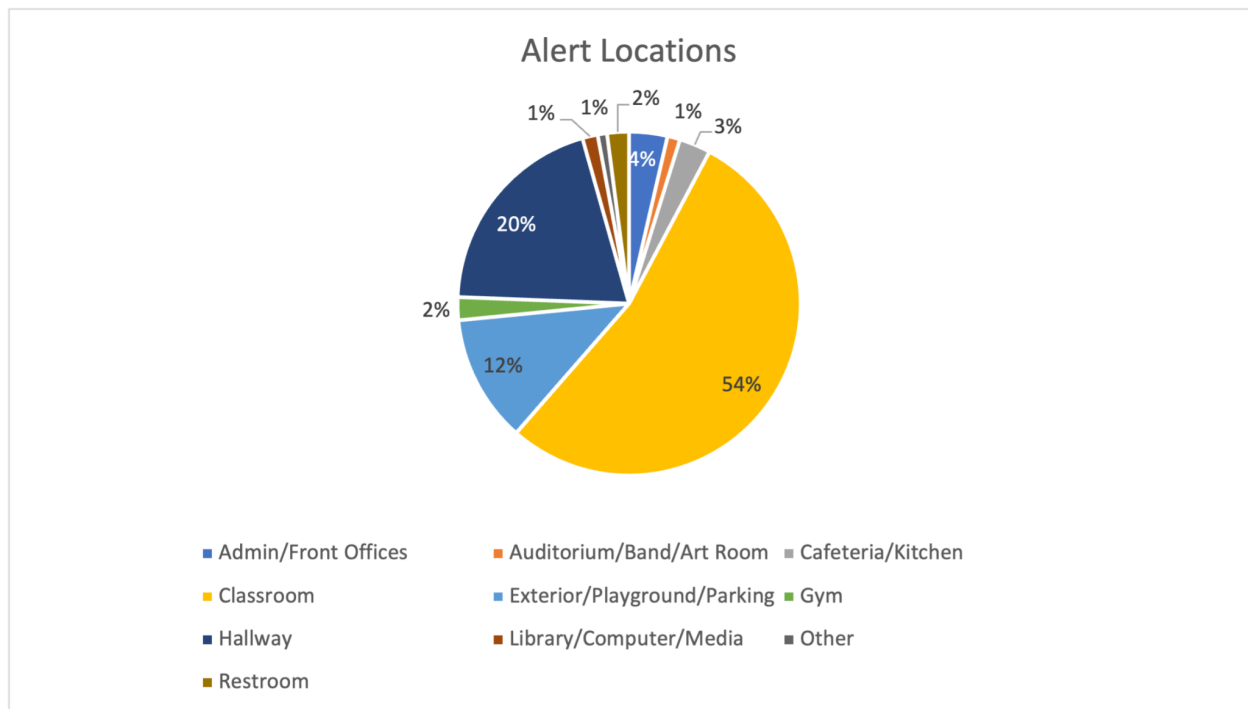
In Fall 2021, the number of staff on average per school that used CrisisAlert to request help for an incident had doubled to 6 over the previous year, but Spring 2022 did not see that same rise. The trend has stabilized, with only a slight increase from Fall 2021 to 6.13.

Staff called for help slightly more often than Fall 2021.



In Fall 2021, staff experienced a 22% increase in safety incidents over the previous year, but Fall 2021 to Spring 2022 did not experience the same drastic increase. Instead, the overall number of alerts per user increased slightly for all schools, indicating an overall consistent increase.

### 3. About 50% of safety incidents happen outside of the classroom.



Analysis of our Spring 2022 alerts shows that **about 50% of safety incidents happen in the classroom.**

Alerts commonly come from other areas on campus, including 20% in the hallway, 9% in the parking lot, playground, or other exterior location, 4% in the administration or front offices, and 3% in the cafeteria.

**This data further quantifies the need for safety and security supports for teachers and staff that extend past the classroom walls and into other common areas of the school campus, including outside spaces such as playgrounds and sport courts and fields.**

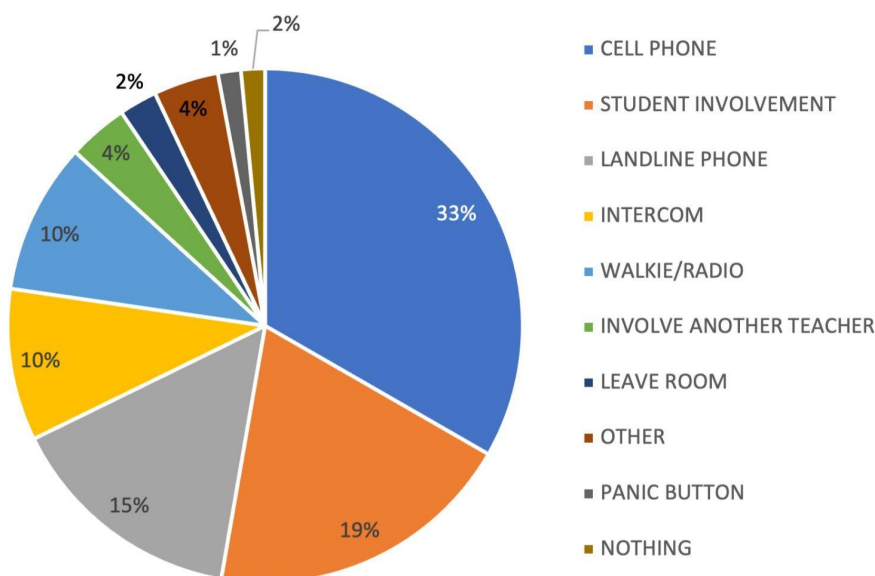
## 4. Teachers prefer the badge over other safety alert options.

Users surveyed were asked what they would have done in a similar emergency had they not had their CrisisAlert badge available. There were a variety of responses received—nearly 1,600—with using their cell phones to call for help at 33%, sending a student at 19%, and using a landline phone at 15%.

The second most popular way to call for help—using a cell phone—presents many of its own challenges: it can be difficult to always have your cell phone with you, cell coverage isn't always reliable in a school building, and not all teachers feel comfortable using their personal device for work-related purposes. The CrisisAlert badge doesn't require teachers to use a personal device and doesn't rely on a cell signal.

*"A teacher across the hall had a student run out of her room... The person coming to the rescue came from the opposite end of the building and ran into them in the hallway. It is so fast and effective when you are in a high-stress situation. You don't have to also try to communicate what you need on a radio, cell phone, or intercom. I also love that it knows exactly where you are."* - Elementary school teacher (AL)

What would you have done in a similar emergency situation without your CrisisAlert badge?





None of the other options indicated discretion, which is essential for de-escalation. This survey data confirms that our solution is the best way for teachers and staff to call for help. CrisisAlert doesn't depend on a cellular signal or require the person who activates it to be in any one location. It also allows for the opportunity to de-escalate.

*"A student was provoking a fight in the hallway. As soon as I realized it was escalating into an actual fight, I pressed the alert. **I was in a location that would have been difficult to alert other adults, so this system was needed.**" - Middle school teacher (TX)*



## 5. Discretion Leads to De-escalation

As CrisisAlert usage data shows, student behavior incidents continue to remain elevated, both in and out of the classroom. Teachers have many ways to call for help, but none of the traditional options offer discretion. Mobile-based apps, wall-mounted panic buttons, and landline phones require teachers and staff to make visible efforts to call for help and require that teachers turn away from the situation and potentially lose control. The simple visual representation can be enough to cause an escalation in behavior.

The CrisisAlert badge offers an extremely discreet way for teachers and staff to call for help, ensuring they can focus on controlling and de-escalating the situation to a resolution, all while causing as little disruption to the learning environment as possible.

*“Students were involved in a physical altercation on one of the remote playing fields. Staff present could not stop the incident without assistance. In the past in these situations, I would have had to radio for assistance and keep struggling to defuse the situation. Multiple staff members come out quickly to assist us. **The quick response kept the situation from getting totally out of hand** and class was able to continue.” - Middle school teacher (AL)*

*“By using the badge, help was immediately here. That help included administrators, SRO, and the school nurse. None of the students noticed I called for help **because the badge button is inconspicuous.**” - Elementary school teacher (MS)*

Additionally, **improved outcomes of behavior incidents are an important part of creating a school culture and climate in which teachers feel safe and empowered to call for help when they need it.**

*“There was an incident in my classroom that required assistance. The alert system was very helpful in de-escalating the incident. **The response time made me feel confident that administration would be there for me in the future.**” - Elementary school teacher (FL)*

*"I have used this badge twice. The most recent time was when a group of students was refusing to go to class well after the bell rang and got into a heated argument that I was concerned would become a fight. The first time I used the badge, a student asked to go to her locker. A few minutes later, one of my students came running and told me that she had passed out in the hallway. Sure enough, the student was on the floor, unresponsive. In both situations, the admin responded promptly. It is easy to use and makes me feel safe. If a fight breaks out or there is **another emergency situation, I know I always have this badge on me, whereas I might not have my phone or another student to send for help.**" - Middle school teacher (IN)*

*"Two boys were about to engage in a fight on the bus ramp. Another teacher and I separated the boys, but after a few minutes, they weren't on their buses and it looked like trouble may escalate. I pressed the alert and had an assistant principal and SRO on-site immediately. **I know that no matter where I am on campus, I can notify people of a potential problem.**" - Middle school teacher (TX)*

## 6. CrisisAlert has 100% adoption; the badge is easiest to use.

CENTEGIX understands the difficulty of using a mobile phone application in a crisis. There are many steps that a staff member must navigate – from having a phone easily accessible, having a network connection, and navigating to find the app, log in, and execute the correct steps to initiate an alert. All of these steps are challenging in a time of crisis.

We designed our solution with a wearable badge to equip staff with the fastest and easiest way to call for help. CENTEGIX has distributed over 135,000 badges to teachers and staff, enabling full user adoption.

With the wearable CrisisAlert badge, a staff member simply clicks 3 times to get help for an everyday emergency (“StaffAlert”) or clicks 8+ times to initiate a campus-wide alert.

The wearable badge is the preferred way for staff to call for help and avoids the many barriers to using a mobile phone:

- User must download the application to either a personal or district-provided device.
- Phone must be on and easily accessible (and not in a personal bag or desk drawer).
- Phone must have a cell signal or be connected to the network.
- In an emergency, a user must find the phone, unlock it, find the app, log in to the app, and remember how to initiate an alert – all while also trying to manage the incident.

In an emergency, “fight or flight reactions” make it difficult to remember all these steps and have the fine motor skills needed to operate a mobile device. Fumbling with a mobile phone can cost critical seconds in response time.

*“When two students engaged in a heated verbal confrontation, I was able to press the Centegix badge and help arrived within seconds. Having the Centegix badge creates a safe environment for the students and staff. Centegix **takes the thinking out of a crisis situation and helps teachers and staff resolve problems quickly and safely before they escalate.**” - Middle school teacher (GA)*

*"Two students were arguing until student A shoved student B onto the ground. While this conflict would have been one sided, as student A was much larger, the administration showed up in number. The fact that three admin were at my door within under a minute prevented what could have been more of an issue. **The result was shockingly fast. My admin acted with an urgency.**" - Middle school teacher (TX)*

*"As I was walking from my 3rd period class to my 4th period class (I walk from class to class as a collaborating special education teacher) I noticed a group of students as well as a few teachers close together at the end of the hallway. I thought a fight may be occurring and as I got closer to the scene I could tell a fight was still in progress. I pressed my alert button three times and made sure the students were separated and guided nearby students to class. **CrisisAlert saved not just seconds but minutes in terms of getting help.** Great system." - High school teacher (FL)*



## Summary

We saw trends from Fall 2021 continue to increase in numerous safety incident categories for Spring 2022, but overall the numbers are starting to stabilize. This indicates that district leaders need to continue to make material investments in the safety and security programs of their schools. Efforts in these areas are critical for teacher retention and recruitment.

Dr. David Lewis, Superintendent of Muscogee County Schools (GA), further highlighted the value of having safety solutions in place for teachers and staff. **"In light of the pandemic and other heightened situations that come to the surface with mental health and so on, I've asked them, how do you feel? And unsolicited, several teachers have mentioned that they are appreciative of the fact that our board of education and our school district cares enough about their welfare, their wellbeing, and that of their students that we've purchased this system to ensure that they do have access, if needed, for resources, whether it be school-based administrators or first responders, law enforcement, whatever might be necessary during the school day, at school activities, after-school hours. All those things play to how important, I think, teachers feel that safety and welfare are, and it's really a critical recruitment and retention tool from my viewpoint...It became a topic of discussion from a lot of candidates, asking what does our school district do, how do we approach safety, what tools and resources are available to them."**

CrisisAlert provides data that districts can leverage to identify areas of need and allocate the necessary resources to support and empower teachers while driving student achievement.

*CENTEGIX is grateful for the opportunity to support schools and help protect the lives of students and staff in districts across the country. We are dedicated to our mission of innovating technology to empower and protect people.*

*CENTEGIX is the leader in incident response solutions. Our CrisisAlert platform is the fastest and easiest way for staff to call for help in any emergency from the everyday to the extreme.*

*CENTEGIX creates safer spaces, and leaders nationwide trust our safety solutions to provide peace of mind. To learn more about CENTEGIX, visit [www.centegix.com](http://www.centegix.com).*

Reference:

- 1 - <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/violence-seems-to-be-increasing-in-schools-why/2021/11>
- 2 - <https://www.usnews.com/education/k12/articles/as-students-return-to-school-so-does-school-violence>
- 3 - <https://www.foxbusiness.com/lifestyle/rising-violence-at-schools-impacts-students-education-crime-gun-shooting-crises>
- 4 - <https://dev.curry.virginia.edu/sites/default/files/uploads/epw/Teacher%20Retention%20Policy%20Brief.pdf>
- 5 - [https://via.library.depaul.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1267&context=csh\\_etd](https://via.library.depaul.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1267&context=csh_etd)
- 6 - User surveys conducted weekly January to May via online form
- 7 - Fall 2021 - August 1 to December 31, 2021; Spring 2022 - January 1 to May 27, 2022