



# Fall 2022 School Safety Trends

January 2023



## KEY TAKEAWAYS

In this report, CENTEGIX offers its latest, comprehensive analysis of school safety incidents gathered from our CrisisAlert usage data for the Fall 2022 school semester. Additionally, we analyze survey feedback<sup>1</sup> from staff who have used the CrisisAlert wearable badge to identify insights regarding school safety, including its impact on teacher well-being and job satisfaction, as well as students' perceptions of safety at school. Lastly, we explore how the CrisisAlert solution addresses communication gaps created by mobile-based emergency response apps during crisis incidents.

### Highlights include:

1. Providing safety and security solutions for teachers and staff is important for teacher well-being and job satisfaction, as well as students' perceptions of safety.
2. The CrisisAlert wearable badge eliminates communication vulnerabilities created by mobile app-only incident response solutions.
3. Campus-wide events are a small part of total alerts. Over 98% of all alerts are for medical and behavioral emergencies.
4. The rate of safety incidents has stabilized; elementary schools continue to be the highest users.
5. Almost half of all safety incidents occur outside the classroom; precise location is a critical feature in any emergency alerting system.
6. Teachers continue to prefer the badge to call for help as opposed to traditional options like wall-mounted panic buttons or mobile phones.
7. Discretion is crucial for de-escalation in behavioral incidents, which traditional safety alert options can't provide; discretion plays a role in how safe both teachers and students feel.
8. The CrisisAlert wearable badge has 100% adoption by staff, which is critical for any mobile panic alert solution to be effective.





## OVERVIEW

As the Fall 2022 semester ends and we step into 2023, school districts across the U.S. continue to grapple with the aftershock of Uvalde and the impact violence has on students, teachers, and other community stakeholders.

A recent poll<sup>3</sup> conducted by the Pew Research Center found that about a third of parents of K12 students say they are very or extremely worried about a shooting happening at their children's school. Dr. Mike Duncan<sup>4</sup>, Superintendent of Pike County Schools and Georgia's 2021 Superintendent of the Year, understands parents' concerns. "Parents want to know, more than anything, 'my child's going to be safe.' That's the first thing."

Just as parents are concerned, students, too, feel the impact of recent events and carry that apprehension with them to school. "Students are coming to us with a lot of anxiety, especially as they're reading the news and seeing things that are happening around the country and the response to it," Dr. Duncan explained. "They're coming to us with greater levels of anxiety about safety in their own schools. For them, knowing that their teacher, and every adult in the building, has their back and is watching what's going on—that is a very positive culture piece for the students as well." It's up to school administrators to have the practices and tools in place to facilitate this support.

Students aren't the only ones positively impacted by proactive safety solutions. Just as students need to feel safe while learning, teachers need to feel safe while teaching. Few schools have escaped the effects of the teacher shortage. Leaders need to think critically about what potential employees are looking for and what their schools have to offer. "A lot of people that we interview? They're parents. And a lot of people that you hire? They're going to bring their babies with them whenever you hire them, and that's what you want," shared Principal Courtney McBride<sup>5</sup> of Flomaton Elementary School in Escambia County (AL). "When you say 'Safety is not just something that we talk about, it's something that we've invested in, and here's what this investment looks like...You don't even really know that it's there. But when you need it, it buys you time. And time is a gift when there is an emergency situation.' There's no doubt about that."

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"2022 saw the greatest number of school shootings in our nation's history."

Homeland Security Secretary,  
Alejandro Mayorkas<sup>2</sup>

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"I received a tip from a student that a peer was threatening to bring a gun to the school to kill others. I was able to hit my button 3 times to alert administration. They were at my door in seconds. Luckily they were already aware of the situation and the police had been dispatched to the student's house. With the increased crime in our country and against children in schools, I really like having something on me at all times that can alert authorities in case of an emergency."

High school teacher, GA



## EXAMINING EMERGENCY RESPONSE SOLUTIONS POST-CRISIS

The factors that contributed to the outcomes at both Parkland, Florida, and Uvalde, Texas, have been determined: there was a critical breakdown in communication resulting in first responder delays and confusion on what was happening in real-time. CENTEGIX has been working together with all levels of district and school leadership across the country ever since Parkland to address the issues contributing to the communication failures:

- Unreliable wi-fi and cellular connectivity throughout the school;
- Poor user adoption/downloads of mobile apps on personal phones;
- Inconsistent staff practices around keeping cell phones on-person;
- No school-wide intercom notification of the lockdown and lack of visual cues (strobe lights or computer screens) that map to the district protocols.

COMMUNICATION AND ALERT-RELATED CHALLENGE*	CRISISALERT SUPPORT
Difficulty accessing an app-based alert system	Every employee can quickly and discreetly request help or initiate a lockdown by clicking their wearable badge.
Delayed activation time of alert system	A dedicated network of badges, strobes, hubs, and gateways is installed and monitored to ensure 100% coverage everywhere on campus. No wi-fi or cellular signal needed to send an alert.
Delayed campus-wide notifications of threat	Our software automatically initiates our strobe lights, automatically initiates the school intercom system, and automatically takes over all displays that are connected to the school network – all mapped to the district protocols.
Failed use of school-wide intercom	Visual strobes, digital messages, and automated intercom announcements inform everyone of a campus-wide incident and the actions to take.
Lack of differentiation between less urgent and crisis alerts	Ability to differentiate between alerts as well as deliver floor- and room-level specific location information instantly to designated responders, saving critical response time.
Lack of overall reliability	No wi-fi or cellular signal needed to send an alert. Automatic phone call and digital message to 911 first responders within seconds of pushing the button. Redundancies and fail safes on every level of the system: every staff member has a badge, private network, backup batteries provide 8 hours of backup and have a multi-year lifespan, multiple campus-wide notifications to ensure everyone receives the alert.

\*As Identified in the [Interim Report](#)





# 1. SAFETY IS A PRIORITY

The issue of teacher retention and recruitment remains at the forefront of educational leaders' minds. Districts across the country continue to compete for qualified educators and staff to fill their vacancies. One survey<sup>6</sup> found that teachers specifically want workplace safety improvements, reaffirming it as a top priority. As a result, administrators must provide safety and security strategies and solutions that ensure teachers can do their jobs effectively and return home safely at the end of the day. **Potential employees want to know that the culture and climate of the school they're joining is one that is proactive and supportive.**

"That's the beauty of the data, it allows you to have conversations on both ends of 'hey, we might be running lots of alerts in this building, so let's figure out the 'why' and then let's talk about, with that staff, maybe 'norming' what is a crisis versus what is a classroom management issue,'" shared Olathe Public Schools' Assistant Superintendent Dr. Jim McMullen. He continued, "The one thing we've continually stressed throughout this process is that we're never going to tell a staff member 'don't press the button'... any time a staff member feels they need assistance, they can hit it."<sup>7</sup>

Parents, too, want to know that a safe culture and climate exist when they send their children to school every day. Students are feeling increased anxiety these days, and ensuring they feel safe while learning is paramount to both their overall health and wellbeing and their academic achievement. A study conducted by Mathematica<sup>8</sup> found that "students who felt safer were more attentive and efficient in the classroom. These students also reported fewer symptoms of depression, such as feeling unhappy and having difficulty enjoying themselves. Making sure that students are engaged and attentive in the classroom can contribute to long-term success above and beyond intellectual capacities such as reading or math skills."

Simply put, **student success is dependent on students feeling safe while at school.**

"The society that we live in, when we do have an alert, even when we have a drill, the students text the parents. When parents learn about the system that we have in place, and that we're doing drills, and we are practicing, they are more comfortable," said Douglas County Schools' Chief of Police Tracey Whaley. "If you talked to school resource officers around the country [in June], when we had the unfortunate event in Uvalde, Texas, where people lost their lives, we all received countless calls, 9-1-1 got countless calls. And the question that we got undoubtedly was, 'Are the schools safe?'... Parents feel comfortable leaving their children at school, in our care, knowing that we are taking every step...They understand what [CrisisAlert] is in place to do. And they're very appreciative of it."





Survey data from CrisisAlert users indicates very high satisfaction levels with the wearable CrisisAlert badge.

## STAFF MEMBERS WHO USED THEIR BADGE IN FALL 2022 RATED THEIR EXPERIENCE AS FOLLOWS:

Did using the badge empower you to rapidly resolve the situation?

**95% said 'Yes'**

Does having it help you feel safe and supported as a staff member?

**97% said 'Yes'**

Was it easy to use your CrisisAlert badge?

**99.5% said 'Yes'**

Do you recommend CrisisAlert?

**9.2 out of 10**

Users in the survey provided feedback that indicated the badge is the easiest solution to call for help during a crisis and that it contributes to their peace of mind and allows them to focus on teaching and student achievement.

"The first incident, a student I did not know collapsed outside my doorway and I pressed my CENTEGIX badge and was able to get help for the student quickly. The second time I used it was before school and a fight broke out. I was able to call for help while also starting to break the kids up and keep others out of harm's way. The third time I used it was during class change and two students began fighting in my classroom. Again, I was able to call for help while beginning to defuse the situation. When used correctly, it allows for quick response to emergency or serious situations."

High school teacher, FL

"I was dealing with a student with behavior disabilities. I have to alert my admin when I need help in restraining or interacting with one of my students. I have used this a number of times already this school year. Using this helps to alert the needed people to get here quickly when I need that help fast."

Middle school teacher, AL





## RECORD-BREAKING USAGE PROVIDES DECISION-MAKERS WITH CRITICAL DATA

Our data on school safety originates from the CrisisAlert usage patterns of our education customers, which now extend into 28 states. The CrisisAlert platform has directly delivered over 50,000 alerts in the Fall 2022<sup>9</sup> semester. Usage has more than doubled year over year.

Over 7,900 staff members initiated alerts—far surpassing last semester’s all-time-high of 4,800 staff members—for an average of 2.9 times each. **Staff alerts, used for everyday emergencies such as medical and behavior incidents, represent just over 98% of all alerts, a trend we’ve seen since Fall 2020.** As seen in previous semesters, campus-wide emergencies such as weather incidents and lockdowns continue to represent a very small percent of CrisisAlert usage.

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

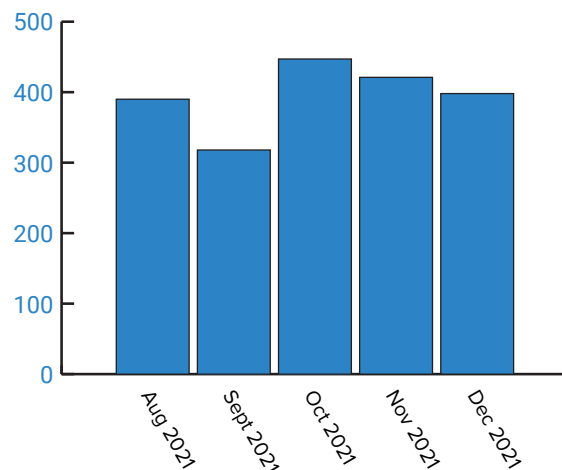
The CrisisAlert Dashboard equips district administrators with actionable data to understand how to best support their schools. Easy access to this data improves school culture and climate, supporting teacher recruitment and retention efforts.



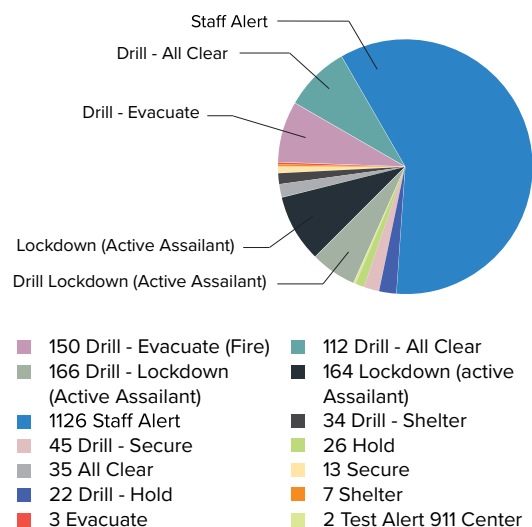
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## SAMPLE DATA ON A CRISISALERT DASHBOARD:

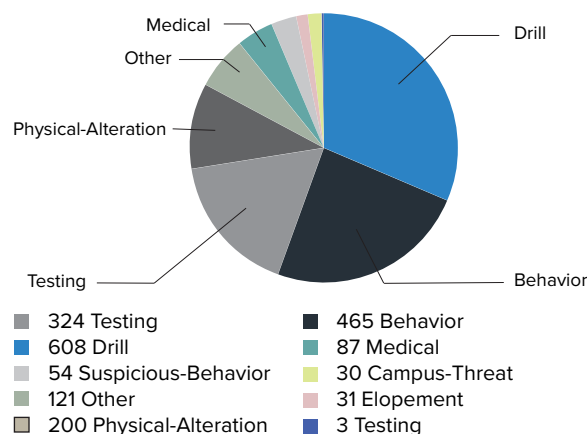
Alerts by Month



Alerts Types



Alert Reasons





## 2. THE RATE OF SAFETY INCIDENTS HAS STABILIZED

In the CrisisAlert platform, school administrators indicate a “close reason” for each alert that provides data about the incidents in their schools.

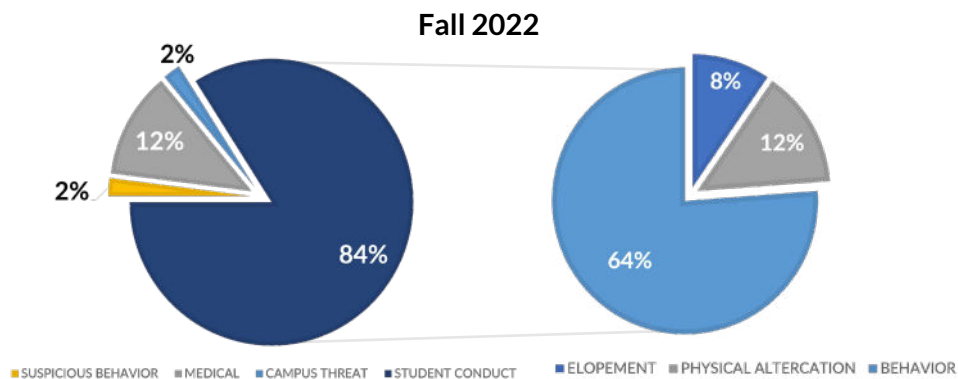
At the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year, districts requested reason codes for two new alert categories to accommodate an increase in student behavior incidents: elopement and general behavior issues (in addition to the existing “physical altercation” reason).

### STUDENT BEHAVIOR INCIDENTS ACCOUNT FOR 84% OF ALERTS

In Fall 2022, elopement accounted for 8% of all incidents, an increase from 5% in Spring 2022 and 6% in Fall 2021. In Fall 2022, physical altercation accounted for 12% of all incidents, a decrease from 15% in Spring 2022 and 23% in Fall 2021.

Last Spring, the combined student conduct categories (behavior, elopement, and physical altercation) represented 84% of all alerts, a sharp increase from Fall 2021. Fall 2022 saw that trend stabilize and hold steady at 84%.

Campus-wide alerts (weather events, lock-in/lock-down) continued to comprise a low percentage of all alerts (2%), a stabilized trend observed since Fall 2020.



### MEDICAL INCIDENTS CONTINUE TO COMPRISE A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF ALERTS

In the Fall 2022 semester, medical incidents continued to make up a large portion of CrisisAlert usage, roughly 12%. Users surveyed indicated strong support for the use of the CrisisAlert solution for medical emergencies involving both staff and students.

### CRISISALERT HELPS SAVE LIVES

During medical incidents, getting help quickly and to the correct location is critical. Often, the speed of response is the difference between life and death. Such was the case at Flomaton Elementary School in Escambia County School District (AL), [where staff members quickly and easily called for medical help when a young boy started choking on a rock on the playground](#). Learn more about this impactful story in this [video](#).



**In medical incidents, getting help quickly and to the correct location is critical.**



**WATCH NOW**

CrisisAlert Helps Saves Young Boy

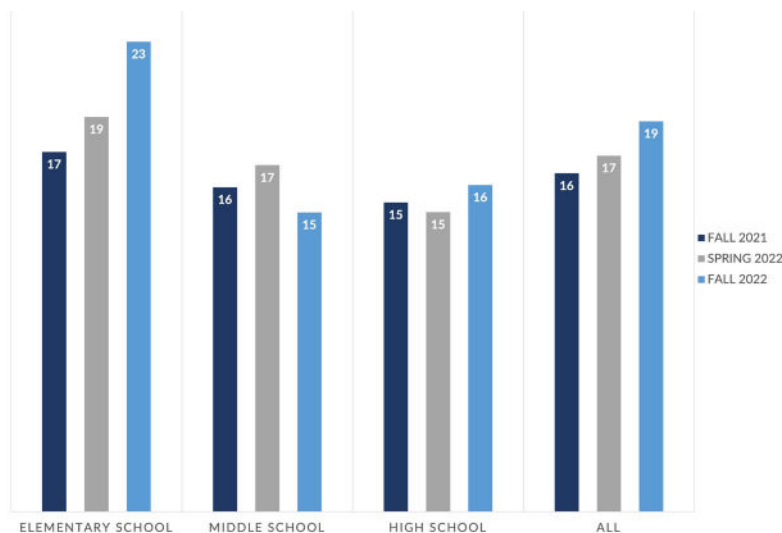




## THE RATE OF SAFETY INCIDENTS HAS REMAINED STABLE

Last semester's data showed all schools averaged 17.3 alerts per semester, a stabilized trend from Fall 2021. Fall 2022 data shows the average number of alerts has remained stable. In Fall 2022, schools averaged 19 alerts per semester.

Average Number of Alerts by School Type



Middle schools saw a dip from 16.8 to 14.5 alerts per semester, while high schools saw an increase from 14.6 to 15.9 alerts per semester.

**Elementary schools continue to experience the highest rate of alerts out of all school types**, averaging 22.8 alerts per semester.

"In the middle of a class, one of my students dropped down and began experiencing a seizure. The seizure was not a small one. She hit her mouth as she fell and was bleeding and seizing pretty badly. After about 10 seconds of seizing, I realized it wasn't going to stop soon and we needed medical help in the room. I pressed my CrisisAlert button. Within one minute, I had admin, security, and medical professionals in my room to take care of this student while I took the rest of the students outside. It was amazing. It is so nice to know that if something was happening, the right people would immediately know and come to help out."

High school teacher, NV



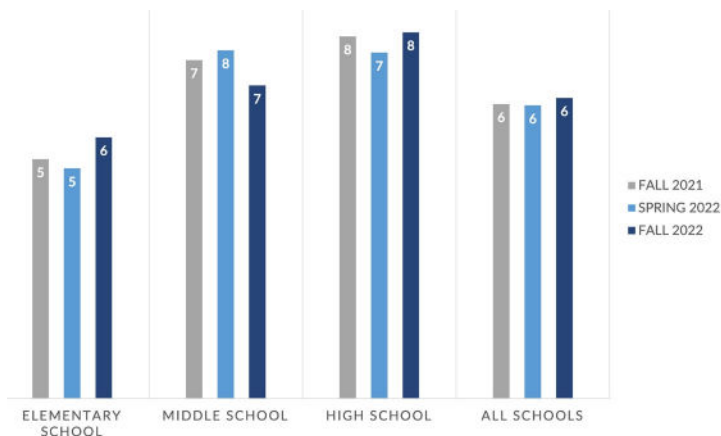
**Elementary schools continue to experience the highest rate of alerts out of all school types, averaging 22.8 alerts per semester.**





## THE NUMBER OF STAFF REQUESTING HELP HAS REMAINED STABLE

Average Number of Staff Requesting Help



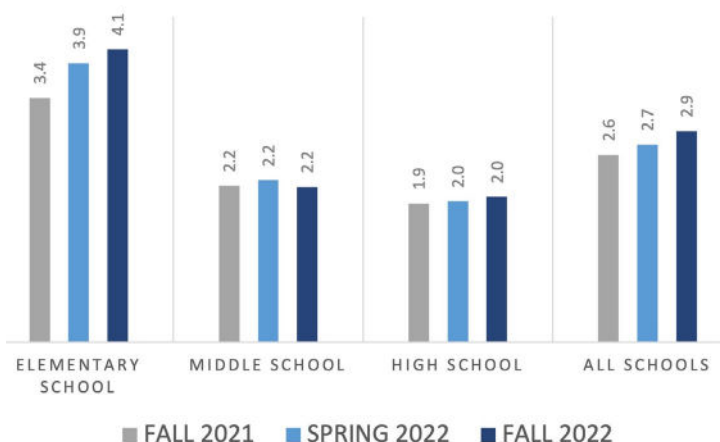
“A student was having a severe allergic reaction. Using the badge let me summon help without delay while I was giving the epi-pen. MASSIVE time saver when seconds counted. Worked great!”

Middle school teacher, GA

Fall 2021 saw the average number of staff per school that used CrisisAlert to request emergency help double over the previous year's. In Spring 2022, that upward trend slowed substantially, and in Fall 2022, the trend stabilized, with the average number increasing only slightly to 6.5 staff members per school requesting help.

## STAFF RELY ON CRISISALERT MORE THAN EVER BEFORE

Average Alerts Per User



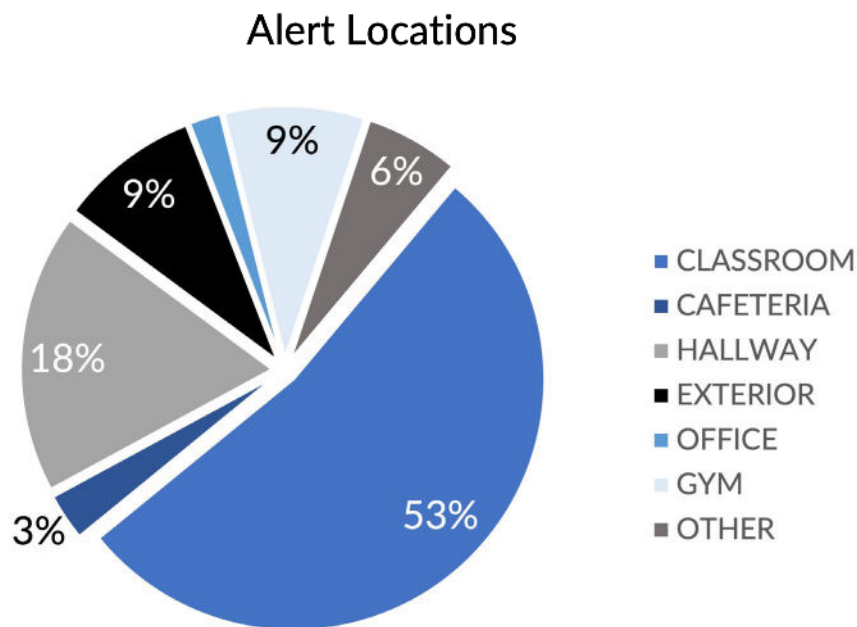
Spring 2022 saw a stabilization from the sharp increase in safety incidents from Fall 2021, with only a slight increase across all school types. Fall 2022 saw a small increase, just under 7%, in the frequency staff called for help.

Similar to previous semesters, elementary schools saw the largest increase among school types.





### 3. ABOUT 50% OF SAFETY INCIDENTS HAPPEN OUTSIDE OF THE CLASSROOM



Analysis of staff and campus-wide alerts show that only **53% of safety incidents happen in the classroom.**

Alerts commonly come from other areas on campus, including:

- **18%** in the hallway
- **9%** in the parking lot, playground, or other exterior locations
- **2%** in the administration or front offices
- **3%** in the cafeteria

This data mirrors what we've seen in previous semesters and reaffirms the need for safety and security support for teachers and school staff outside the walls of the classroom and in outside areas like playgrounds, sports courts, and fields.



**Analysis of staff and campus-wide alerts show that only 53% of safety incidents happen in the classroom.**





## 4. TEACHERS PREFER A BADGE OVER OTHER SAFETY ALERT OPTIONS

We surveyed users on what they would have done had the same situation occurred before they had CrisisAlert; there were a range of responses. **In over 1,200 responses submitted, the most popular responses included:**

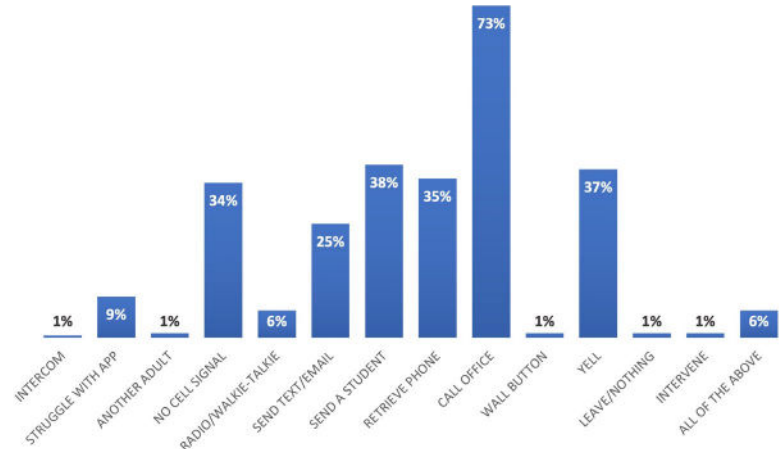
"I would..."

- have to retrieve my phone from my desk, bag, other. I do not keep my phone on my person.
- have difficulty getting a strong cellular signal in my classroom and/or on school grounds.
- struggle with powering up, unlocking, and accessing the right app in a crisis situation.
- call the office and wait for someone to answer.
- send a text/email.
- yell for help.
- send a student to find help.
- use the radio/walkie-talkie.
- use the wall button.
- use the intercom.
- involve another teacher.
- leave to get help.
- intervene/try to stop the conflict.



**The CrisisAlert badge doesn't depend on a cellular signal or require the person who activates it to be in any one location.**

If This Situation Had Occurred Before You Had CrisisAlert, What Would You Have Done?



Many of the responses we received involve using a personal cell phone; that presents its own set of challenges:

- You may not always have your cell phone with you.
- Wi-fi and cellular service aren't always reliable in a school building.
- Not all teachers are comfortable using personal devices for work-related purposes.

The CrisisAlert badge doesn't require teachers to use a personal device and doesn't rely on a cell signal or wi-fi to send an alert.

New and veteran educators alike know that discretion is critical when de-escalating an emergency situation. The survey data corroborates CrisisAlert as an ideal way for teachers and staff to call for help. The CrisisAlert badge doesn't depend on a cellular signal or require the person who activates it to be in any one location.

**"Within a split second of me pressing my Centegix button due to a student fight, our principal, assistant principal, nurse and school resource officer were on the scene and prohibited the fight from escalating. I feel our staff and students are much more safe now than ever all thanks to Centegix!"**

**Elementary school teacher, AL**





## 5. THE IMPORTANCE OF DISCRETION

Echoing what was observed in Spring 2022, student behavior incidents remain elevated and accounted for the majority of alerts in Fall 2022. These incidents are also occurring both inside and outside the classroom.

Teachers and staff may have other ways to notify administrators of an incident, but none of the traditional options provide discretion. Mobile-based apps, wall-mounted panic or call buttons, landline phones, and two-way radios all require focused attention and a visible effort on the teacher's part to use. This can often put them at risk of losing control of the situation. The simple visual representation of calling for help 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, while causing as little disruption to the learning environment as possible. The importance of this can't be overstated, as improving outcomes in these situations directly impacts the school culture and climate. CrisisAlert helps create an environment where teachers and staff feel safe and empowered to call for help when they need it.

Additionally, discretion plays an important role in student achievement, because students' perceptions of safety influence how well they are able to focus and perform. Research<sup>8</sup> has found that "feeling unsafe at school had a statistically significant effect on educational attainment as students are exposed to greater in-school violence and disruption." It also leads to students being "less able to focus on learning while at school. Students who feel unsafe may also be disruptive in the classroom, causing peers to feel less safe and preventing learning."

Furthermore, while they only represent a very small fraction of alerts, campus-wide lockdowns—especially those involving an intruder—also demand discretion. Seasoned educator Principal Courtney McBride of Flomaton Elementary in Escambia County, AL, explains the importance of a discreet way to alert first responders during a lockdown scenario in this [video](#).



**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, while causing as little disruption to the learning environment as possible.**



### WATCH NOW

Importance of Discretion  
During Lockdown



## 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, to logging in and executing the correct steps to initiate an alert. All of these steps are challenging in a time of crisis, when every second matters.

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 270,000 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, including:

- 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 wi-fi 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, flight, or freeze" 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.

"While in class, I had a student pass out. I pressed my alert badge, and had three principals in our room within two minutes. This was a lot faster than if I were to have to call the office, and then locate an administrator. It was also a lot more discreet than if I were to radio the situation."

High school teacher, AL



**In an emergency, "fight, flight, or freeze" 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.**



## SUMMARY

By the end of the Fall 2022 semester, staff rely on CrisisAlert more than ever to create safe and productive learning environments. This is further evidence that continued focus on safety and security program investments is needed by district leaders. These efforts are critical for teacher well-being and job satisfaction.

Additionally, other incident response solutions, such as a mobile-based app or wall-mounted panic button, lack the functionality that is critical in real-world emergencies, like the one seen in Uvalde, Texas, last year. CrisisAlert eliminates the communication vulnerabilities created by these other solutions and enables rapid incident response, improving outcomes and saving lives.

Also directly impacted by these efforts are students' perceptions of safety and, therefore, their academic performance. When students don't feel safe, they can't focus on learning. Having a comprehensive, well-thought-out system and protocols in place for how to react and respond in emergencies can minimize anxiety for students and creates an environment where students can grow and flourish.

"Our students feel safe because of the system. They recognize the system in the building. They recognize when we perform tests, and when we perform tests, our students take it seriously and they take their safety seriously," commented Douglas County Schools' Chief Tracey Whaley<sup>10</sup>. He continued, "When we perform the tests and we do our drills, the students recognize it as a time to learn. And then they do exactly what they're being taught to do to remain safe. And the students, based upon that, understand when there is an alert, whether it is for discipline, whether it is for medical or anything, and they take it seriously. They then become part of the team to make sure the school's safe."

CrisisAlert also 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 safe spaces by innovating technology to empower and protect people, 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).**



**Continued focus on safety and security program investments is needed by district leaders.**

"I work in a BI classroom and we deal with behavior issues that can escalate into dangerous territory quite rapidly. We recently had a student who became a threat to other staff members and students in the classroom. When behaviors spiral out of control, our classroom needs quick assistance, and use of the badge ensured that."

**Elementary/middle school teacher, FL**



**CrisisAlert also 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.**



#### References:

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- 5 - CENTEGIX Every Story Matters, C. McBride, [https://youtu.be/7n0A7lxW\\_6U](https://youtu.be/7n0A7lxW_6U)
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- 9 – Fall 2021 - July 1 to December 31, 2021; Spring 2022 - January 1 to June 30, 2022; Fall 2022 - July 1 to December 31, 2022
- 10 - CENTEGIX Every Story Matters, T. Whaley, <https://youtu.be/gMn6l8eiZrE>

\*Footnote: Our Spring 2022 School Safety Trends Report included analysis of data for the Spring 2022 semester that was collected from January 1, 2022 to May 27, 2022. In this report, data for the Spring 2022 semester was collected from January 1, 2022 to June 30, 2022.

