



# CUSTOMER CASE STUDY: IMPROVING RESPONSE TIME TO SCHOOL SHOOTING INCIDENTS



## Phoenix Academy Charter School



**Schools:** 3 serving grades K-8  
**Students:** 1,200  
**Location:** High Point, NC

Phoenix Academy, North Carolina's oldest and largest public charter school, is located in what is known as the "Piedmont Triad" area of North Carolina, encompassing the cities of High Point, Winston-Salem and Greensboro with 1.9 million residents. The school was founded in 1997 to provide a high-quality education to students that couldn't get the support they needed from public schools in the Triad region.

The school offers the community what they call "The Phoenix Difference: A Small Community Feel with a Private School Caliber Education" and regularly exceeds the school charter's growth and academic performance targets.

## Security Concerns

After the Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School shooting in Parkland, Florida on February 14, 2017, Phoenix Academy in High Point, North Carolina revisited the school's emergency response plans for active shooter incidents. The school performed a "lockdown" drill and found that their overall response time was less than five minutes, a statistic that at first pleased school officials, until they took a closer look at the damage an active shooter could do in five minutes' time. According to statistics from the ALICE Training Institute, an average of one death can occur between every 5-15 seconds during an active shooter incident, and that most incidents only last between 5-7 minutes. In the Parkland shooting, 17 lives were lost in under five minutes. In light of these statistics, the school determined that lockdown alone was not enough. Lead by Superintendent Kim Norcross, school officials began looking for solutions that could help them reduce response time if an active shooter were to enter one of their three school buildings.

First, the school wanted to ensure that building occupants could exit the building safely during lockdown. They also began looking for a mechanism that could sound an active shooter alarm, which led to a review of active shooter detection systems. They wanted a gunshot detection system that could filter out false alerts, integrate with their video management and access control systems, and directly alert 9-1-1.



*Kim Norcross  
Founder & Superintendent  
Phoenix Academy Charter School*

"We recognized opportunities to build upon our existing lockdown and evacuation processes with more capable and responsive technology. We're honored to bring this landmark installation to life."

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# SOUNDING THE ALARM FOR SCHOOL SAFETY WITH CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY

## THE PHOENIX ACADEMY SOLUTION

### AUTOMATING THE 9-1-1 CALL

The school chose the **Guardian Indoor Active Shooter Detection System** for its dual-mode acoustic and infrared detection sensors that detect gunshots in sub-one second and filters out false alerts. One major selling point was the Guardian's ability to integrate into the City of High Point's 911 Computer Aided Dispatch System by **CentralSquare Technologies**. This unique direct-to-911 integration automates the emergency call to police and provides dispatch with real-time shooting location information, bypassing the delays associated with 911 emergency calls.

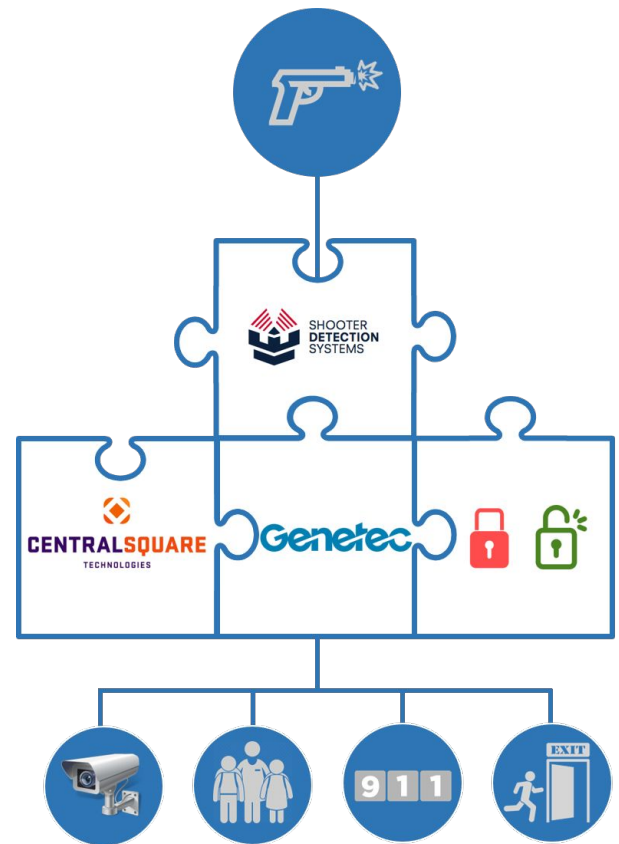
### BEYOND LOCKDOWN

When preparing for an active shooter emergency, most schools train with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's "Run, Hide, Fight" method of response. When a school goes into "lockdown", entrances and exits are temporarily locked to anyone outside of law enforcement, forcing most building occupants to hide until law enforcement clears the building. To address the evacuation problem, the school installed door locks that allow for safe egress when the school is in lockdown mode. The school also installed a door barricade system to create a safe space inside the building that an active shooter cannot penetrate.

### A COMPLETE SCHOOL SAFETY SOLUTION

As a key piece of the puzzle, the school added more surveillance cameras and implemented **Genetec Security Center** as their video management system, which turns Guardian shot alerts into automated actions, such as instantly pulling live camera views to the incident area. All of these solutions are now integrated together to simultaneously alert building occupants, school security, and law enforcement to an active shooter in any Phoenix Academy building, so all involved can take the necessary actions to reduce response time and save lives during an active shooter incident.

## INNOVATIONS IN INTEGRATION WITH COMPUTER-AIDED DISPATCH (CAD)



This proprietary scholastic detection and response system aligns SDS' Guardian Indoor Active Shooter Detection System with CentralSquare's Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System, offering Phoenix Academy a comprehensive and streamlined security upgrade that notifies both individuals inside the school and police of an active shooting incident.

In a live-fire exercise with the system, the City of High Point Police Department demonstrated how shot location is immediately available within dispatch on both the SDS floor plan mapping software and within the CAD ONESolution system in Dispatch. Through this CAD integration, shot location information is also instantly viewable on police Mobile Data Computers (MDTs) in the field. This provides on-duty officers with real-time situational awareness so they know exactly where the shots were fired and can directly target the active shooter threat.