

Sacred Heart installs most advanced school safety system

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MT PLEASANT, MI - Soon Sacred Heart Academy will have ballistic shields on entrances, security devices on classroom doors, and an instantaneous alert system.

The school is the first in Isabella County to partner with the Michigan-based LockOut Co. and install its SmartBoot System, aimed at enhancing school safety. "SHA is the largest single-campus Catholic school installation our company has ever done," says LockOut Co. President and Co-Founder Rob Couturier. "The team at Sacred Heart has a solid plan in place and we are proud to partner with them for the safety of their students, faculty, and staff."

On Monday, installers began the work of placing "boots" in doorways and planning for additional pieces of the security project.

The system, to be fully implemented by fall, is part of a nearly \$300,000 Safety & Security Initiative driven by a parent and law-enforcement task force. Also as part of the initiative, Sacred Heart Academy is improving lighting for better efficiency, adding additional surveillance cameras, installing direct-dial phones in each classroom, and improving playground, drop-off lanes, and access/entry safety.

"Although we do not think SHA is likely for any kind of incident or attack, today's world does not allow any school or any organization to consider itself exempt from unsolicited harm. The extra measures provided by this initiative will allow teachers to concentrate on teaching, and children to focus on learning in a safe and caring environment," says Mary Kay Yonker, Principal of Sacred Heart Academy. "Parents can trust the wellbeing of their children every day because SHA is doing what's right for our students."

"The number of investors who contributed to this effort is evidence of the importance of the safety and security of our students," says Rick McGuirk, local businessman, Academy parent, and organizer of the fundraiser. The Initiative is 100 percent funded by contributions from parents, alumni, parishioners, and friends of the Academy.

"SHA is a small school in a caring community in central Michigan. That doesn't mean we can let our guard down. If someone comes with bad intent, we must protect and manage against the risk. The safety and wellbeing of our students is our number one priority at all times," Mrs. Yonker says.

Sacred Heart Academy is a pre-K through 12th grade Catholic school with 129 years of academic and values-based educational success located in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan. For admissions information, contact Mary Kay Reetz at mkreetz@sha.net or (989) 772-1457. Visit the school website at www.sha.net.

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