



**STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
REAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
Division of Construction Management**



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MEMO TO: OWNERS, ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS AND CONTRACTORS

FROM: MICKEY ALLEN, ASSISTANT FINANCE DIRECTOR *MSA*
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SUBJECT: CLASSROOM DOOR LOCKING HARDWARE

The issue of code-compliant locking of doors within a school room (applicable to all doors to rooms that are normally occupied, not solely classrooms) is an ongoing concern in Alabama schools. Acts of violence in schools have created questions regarding code-compliant locking systems in schools. Unfortunately, there is pressure from non-school, non-fire service vendors that their security locking systems should be installed in schools. Many of the security locking systems seen do not comply with the International Building Codes. Some schools and parent organizations are purchasing these systems before confirming that they are code compliant and are permissible to be used.

The International Building Code requires that:

1. Locks or latches, in required egress doors, which require special knowledge or tools to unlock from the classroom side are prohibited. This includes the use of keys, combinations, or any special device that must be removed or activated prior to unlocking and opening the door. See IBC 1010.2.
2. Bolt locks, flush bolts, etc., of any kind in required egress doors are prohibited. See IBC 1010.2.5
3. The unlatching or unlocking of required egress doors shall not require more than one motion. Hardware exists that permits two locking features, but one motion to unlock and unlatch that hardware. Typical hotel/motel entry door hardware functions in that manner. When the door is closed, the door is automatically locked from the corridor side. Typically, there is an additional optional thumb-turn dead bolt located just above the door handle which can be engaged further securing the door. Upon leaving the room, activating the door handle releases both the main door lock and in the same motion the thumb-turn dead bolt is released, opening the door. See IBC 1010.2.1.

While the devices being offered by various vendors and parent groups are perceived to provide additional security, they have the significant potential to facilitate unintended consequences when incidents of bullying, harassment, or physical violence take place wherein teachers or staff can be locked out of a classroom. These devices can prevent access by police and first responders and may delay egress in the case of emergencies such as a fire, or other forms of mayhem. There are existing solutions that are code compliant and therefore allow first responders access to a classroom in case of an emergency. Classroom doors must be able to be closed for safety and security, as well as opened when needed. Some of these devices will lock the intruder or more frequently a bully in the room with their victims.

Below are examples of security locking devices which are NOT in compliance with the International Building Codes.



Prior to purchasing and installing security locking devices, please confirm with the Division of Construction Management and/or the State Fire Marshal (see contact information below) that the system complies with the International Building Code.

Contact Information for Security Locking Systems

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Division of Construction Management Office

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