

THE INSIDE GUIDE

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SCHOOL SECURITY STARTS WITH PROTECTED™ GLASS

With regard to schools, we face this question now more than ever.

How do you create an environment that is welcoming for students while also protecting them from an increasingly uncertain world?

Over the past decade, school security has evolved dramatically. Aside from access control systems, surveillance cameras, lockdown procedures, etc., there is also the advancement of glass and glazing, especially given that our products often serve as the first point of attack during an emergency.

A Growing National Focus

The National Glass Association (NGA) and its volunteer members, along with architects, security consultants, educators, and manufacturers, have spent years developing best practices and educating stakeholders on how properly designed glazing systems can improve school safety. That work helped lead to ASTM F3561, the industry's first consensus standard specifically evaluating the forced-entry resistance of fenestration systems following a simulated active shooter attack.

At the same time, both federal and state governments continue exploring legislation and funding opportunities that encourage security improvements for educational facilities. The message is becoming increasingly clear: protecting students and educators requires a comprehensive approach—not isolated products or quick fixes.

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Why ASTM F3561 Rating Levels Matter?

ASTM F3561 uses a tiered rating system that goes up to Level 8. Higher levels indicate that the assembly can withstand longer time and greater impact forces after the ballistic phase.

This is important because it provides customers with a standardized way to understand how well a laminated glass system performs against forced-entry attempts and security threats. Additionally, it allows customers to compare products using a recognized testing standard.

Choosing glass that is ASTM F3561 rated means selecting a product with a verified level of resistance to forced entry.

Time Is The Most Valuable Security Tool

The key to the glass is to delay unauthorized entry.

Every additional second gained during a forced-entry event provides more time for teachers to secure classrooms, students to move to safety, first responders to arrive, and emergency protocols to take effect.

Security glazing is designed to maintain the integrity of the opening after repeated impacts, making entry significantly more difficult than with conventional glazing. That delay can make a meaningful difference when every second counts.



The Right Option For Installation

For glazing contractors, choosing PROTECTED™ is the ideal choice, offering customers a purpose-built security solution rather than a retrofit compromise. Unlike aftermarket films applied to existing glass, PROTECTED is fabricated laminated glass tested in accordance with ASTM F3561, ASTM F1233, and H.P. White 5-aal. PROTECTED offers four performance levels that comply with the latest ASTM F3561-22 for impact resistance:

- **PROTECTED Select:** Level 4 with a 5-year warranty
- **PROTECTED Enhanced:** Level 7 with a 5-year warranty
- **PROTECTED Premium:** Level 8 with a 5-year warranty
- **PROTECTED Elite:** Level 8 with a 10-year warranty

Depending on the risk needs, these options deliver consistent performance, exceptional optical clarity, and long-term durability. It integrates seamlessly into new construction and renovation projects while helping meet the growing demand for school security solutions.



Protection Built To Last

Just as importantly, PROTECTED allows glaziers to provide owners with a tested, permanent investment in occupant safety — one that is designed to perform year after year without relying on adhesives, field installation variables, or temporary measures.

When school districts ask for meaningful protection, PROTECTED gives glazing contractors the confidence to recommend a solution built specifically for that purpose and supported by the relevant product warranty.



Security That Supports Learning

PROTECTED allows schools to maintain what makes educational environments successful: natural daylight, visibility, openness, and welcoming spaces. Students and teachers benefit from bright, comfortable classrooms while gaining an added layer of protection that remains largely invisible during everyday use. Good security should support education — not detract from it.

Looking Beyond Temporary Solutions

School districts already have tight budgets, which makes lower-cost retrofit options attractive. While security films can enhance glass performance after breakage under certain conditions, they are generally less durable than laminated security glass under heavy, repeated impacts. Films may not be a cost-effective solution for extended use. It is important to note that security films should not be viewed as substitutes for high-performance security glazing systems specifically engineered and tested for forced-entry resistance. Forced entry glass is highly durable and can delay an attacker for much longer than film.

A Worthy Investment

As more schools evaluate safety upgrades, the conversation is shifting from temporary fixes to long-term resilience. Film is a temporary fix in this case. Protecting students and educators is an investment that extends far beyond today's budget cycle—it is an investment in confidence, preparedness, and peace of mind. Because when it comes to school security, every layer of protection matters—and every second counts. Our children represent the future, and their safety must never be compromised; prioritizing their investment is essential.

For more information about selecting the right PROTECTED product level, please contact us at architects@precisionglassindustries.com.