

# EVALUATION REPORT

## Measures to Combat Gun Violence in DC Public Schools

OIG No. 24-E-01-GAO

July 17, 2025



**DANIEL W. LUCAS**  
INSPECTOR GENERAL



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- promote economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability;
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## MEMORANDUM

To: Delano Hunter, Director  
Department of General Services

Dr. Lewis Ferebee, Chancellor  
District of Columbia Public Schools

From: Daniel W. Lucas   
Inspector General

Date: July 17, 2025

Subject: **Measures to Combat Gun Violence in DC Public Schools**  
**OIG No. 24-E-01-GAO**

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This memorandum transmits our report on measures to combat gun violence in District public schools. This evaluation was included in OIG's *Fiscal Year 2024 Audit and Inspection Plan* and conducted in accordance with the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency's *Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation* and the Government Accountability Office's *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government*.

Our report presents five recommendations to DGS to support the completion of safety- and security-related repairs requested by DCPS. Additionally, we identify four observations and six opportunities for the Chancellor of DCPS to consider in order to strengthen measures that protect DCPS students and school staff.<sup>1</sup>

We requested your feedback on each recommendation and opportunity for improvement, including whether you agree or disagree, your reasoning for any disagreement, and any actions taken or planned with target completion dates.

Both DGS and DCPS provided feedback to our recommendations and observed opportunities. DGS agreed with all five recommendations, indicating that several processes are already operational and committing to new activities including developing a Safety & Security Classification Matrix in consultation with DCPS. DCPS agreed with all six opportunities for improvement, providing implementation timelines ranging from August 2025 through June 2026, including commitments to develop standardized gun violence

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<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to DC Code § 2-534(a)(10) and (20), some of the information in this report has been withheld from the public report due to the sensitive nature of our evaluation.

definitions, conduct security needs assessments, and establish formal communication protocols with MPD. Complete agency responses are included in Appendix 5.

We will monitor the implementation of these recommendations through an annual reporting process, with findings shared with the Council and Mayor. A public version of the report will be available on OIG's website. For any inquiries, please contact Yulanda Gaither, Assistant Inspector General for Inspections & Evaluations, via email at [yulanda.gaither@dc.gov](mailto:yulanda.gaither@dc.gov) or phone at (202) 727-9029.





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Measures to Combat Gun Violence in DC Public Schools

### Summary

Gun violence is a major public safety challenge nationwide. The District of Columbia has implemented multiple strategies to address this issue both in our community and our schools. However, critical gaps in strategy, coordination, and infrastructure leave our schools vulnerable to gun violence.

### Objective

The objective of this evaluation was to assess the implementation and effectiveness of gun violence prevention, intervention, and reduction measures and activities within District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) through school years 2021 through 2023.

### Key Findings and Observations

1. **Infrastructure Failures:** 50 percent of safety- and security-related repairs we evaluated (such as broken doors, locks, windows, and communication systems) exceeded DGS's 45-day completion time, creating fundamental vulnerabilities in school security.
2. **Definitional Gaps:** The District lacks a standardized definition of school gun violence and clear parameters for what constitutes a "school-related" incident, preventing consistent tracking, measurement, and strategic response.
3. **Resource Allocation:** Reduced School Resource Officer staffing has created coverage gaps, with 71 percent of DCPS schools lacking regular officer presence, despite school administrators reporting their value in violence prevention.
4. **Inconsistent Implementation:** While DCPS has established essential safety protocols, their implementation varies significantly across schools, creating a disparate protection level for students and staff.
5. **Coordination Deficiencies:** DCPS has been excluded from key District-wide gun violence prevention initiatives, creating disconnects between school and community safety efforts.

### Recommendations

We recommend that the DGS Director:

1. Immediately prioritize and complete all existing DCPS safety- and security-critical repairs that have exceeded the agency's required 45-day timeframe.
2. Define safety- and security-related repair categories and establish consistent priority levels for such repairs.
3. Apply category and priority level definitions to all accepted and outstanding repair requests.
4. Establish a flagging mechanism in the work order system for safety- and security-related repairs with alerts for approaching deadlines.
5. Implement regular monitoring of safety- and security-related repairs to ensure timely completion.

### Management Response

The agencies agreed with our recommendations and observations. Copies of their responses are included in Appendix 5.



# Measures to Combat Gun Violence in DC Public Schools

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## INTRODUCTION

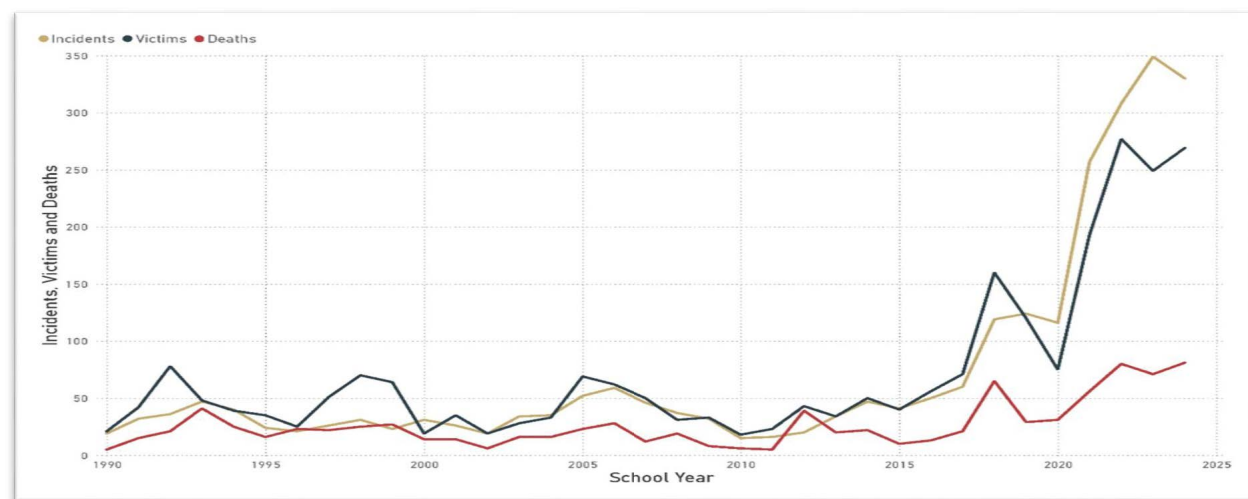
### Objective

The objective of this evaluation was to assess the effectiveness of the various gun violence prevention, intervention, and reduction activities within District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) between school years 2021 through 2023.<sup>2</sup> For details on the evaluation's scope and methodology, see Appendix 3. Note: For the purposes of this report, 'safety-related issues' refers to both safety and security matters.

### Background

In 2024, the US Surgeon General declared firearm violence a “public health crisis” in America, citing that firearms are the leading cause of death of children and adolescents.<sup>3</sup> This national crisis is reflected in school environments, where data from the K-12 School Shooting Database shows a dramatic increase in incidents over recent years. The K-12 School Shooting Database reported that nationwide school gun-related incidents increased sharply since 2020, with more school shootings occurring during the past five school years than over the previous 20 school years combined. See Figure 1 below.

**Figure 1. Incidents of school shootings in the US since 1990.**<sup>4</sup>



<sup>2</sup> School years 2021, 2022, and 2023, refer to the instructional periods 2021 – 2022, 2022 – 2023, and 2023 – 2024, respectively.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Serv. Office of the Surgeon General, Firearm Violence: A Public Health Crisis in America: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory (2024), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK605163/> (last visited May 16, 2025).

<sup>4</sup> Source: Riedman, David (2025). K-12 School Shooting Database.



As illustrated in Figure 1, the United States experienced an alarming escalation in school shootings, with approximately 1,380 incidents occurring from 2020 – 2024, compared to approximately 980 incidents during the entire 20-year period from 2000 – 2019. This means the past five school years alone have seen more than 40 percent more school shootings than in the previous two decades combined, demonstrating the escalating nature of this crisis in educational settings nationwide.

The persistent threat of gun violence in DC communities and schools creates profound and far-reaching impacts on the educational environment. With this backdrop, District lawmakers have prioritized addressing youth crime and gun violence by implementing multiple prevention, intervention, and reduction strategies and programs to prevent youth-involved crime, support at-risk youth, and create safer communities.

School and community violence is inherently interconnected. Violence that originates in communities often spills into schools, while conflicts that begin in schools may escalate in neighborhood settings. Students navigate between these environments daily, making a comprehensive approach essential. Effective prevention requires coordination between school-specific measures and broader community initiatives. Understanding this relationship provides important context for evaluating the District's multi-layered approach to school safety.

### ***Community Gun Violence Initiatives***

In 2022, the District's Criminal Justice Coordinating Counsel and Office of Gun Violence Prevention commissioned the National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform *Washington DC Gun Violence Reduction Strategic Plan*,<sup>5</sup> which described the many initiatives implemented to address District-wide gun violence, including:

- Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement's (ONSE) Pathways Program and Violence Intervention Initiative;
- Office of Gun Violence Prevention—Building Blocks DC;
- Hospital-based Violence Intervention Program;
- Office of the Attorney General's (OAG) Cure the Streets;
- Department of Parks and Recreation's Roving Leaders Program; and
- Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services' (DYRS) Credible Messengers Initiative.

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<sup>5</sup> National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform, [Gun Violence Reduction Strategic Plan](#), April 2022.

The District government has enacted several initiatives and programs to address and reduce youth crime, including the:

- Neighborhood Engagement Achieves Results Amendment Act of 2016 (NEAR Act),<sup>6</sup> effective June 30, 2016, which included several community-based initiatives to reduce crime and improve public safety through, in part, the establishment of the Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement, the Office of Violence Prevention and Health Equity, and the Community Crime Prevention Team Program within the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD);
- Secure DC Omnibus Amendment Act of 2024,<sup>7</sup> included provisions for gun violence reduction strategies, and firearm data reporting, and an MPD public awareness initiative; and
- Recidivism Reduction at DYRS Amendment Act of 2024,<sup>8</sup> which established new initiatives to improve public safety and reduce youth recidivism.

### ***School Gun Violence Initiatives***

Programs and initiatives to reduce forms of violence specifically for the District's public schools and students include the:

- Office of the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice's Safe Passage Program, which operates in specific areas to improve safety for students traveling to and from school;<sup>9</sup>
- ONSE's Leadership Academy, which is a school-based initiative that promotes positive outcomes and safe environments by providing wraparound services and mentorship through direct engagement with students and their families;<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> DC Law 21-125, <https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/laws/21-125>.

<sup>7</sup> DC Act 25-411, [https://lims.dccouncil.gov/downloads/LIMS/53364/Signed\\_Act/B25-0345-Signed\\_Act.pdf?Id=186642](https://lims.dccouncil.gov/downloads/LIMS/53364/Signed_Act/B25-0345-Signed_Act.pdf?Id=186642).

<sup>8</sup> DC Act 25-720, [https://lims.dccouncil.gov/downloads/LIMS/55504/Signed\\_Act/B25-0826-Signed\\_Act.pdf?Id=205768](https://lims.dccouncil.gov/downloads/LIMS/55504/Signed_Act/B25-0826-Signed_Act.pdf?Id=205768).

<sup>9</sup> See Safe Passage website, <https://safepassage.dc.gov/page/safe-passage-priority-areas-2024-2025>.

<sup>10</sup> See Mayor Bowser Announces ONSE Leadership Academy at Anacostia High School, Office of the Mayor, Washington DC, October 3, 2019 (<https://mayor.dc.gov/release/mayor-bowser-announces-onse-leadership-academy-anacostia-high-school>, last visited June 12, 2025).

- DYRS's Oasis Program, which aims to keep youths, 10 to 17 years old, out of the juvenile justice system;<sup>11</sup> and
- OAG's Leaders of Tomorrow Youth Violence Prevention Grant program, which funds crime reduction, violence interruption, and youth development activities to enhance public safety, and provide alternatives to incarceration.<sup>12</sup>

An important component of the District's school safety infrastructure has been the School Resource Officer (SRO) program implemented by MPD. This program has undergone significant changes in recent years, with staffing levels declining from around 99 officers between 2019-2021 to 35 officers in 2024.

While these District-wide initiatives form an important foundation for violence prevention broadly, our evaluation focused specifically on measures directly related to protecting students and staff within DC public schools—examining primarily their implementation and identifying opportunities to strengthen their effectiveness. Due to definitional inconsistencies and data limitations discussed in our findings, identifying comprehensive effectiveness measurements for many of these initiatives remains challenging.

## EVALUATION RESULTS

Our evaluation revealed significant gaps and inconsistencies in the District's approach to preventing gun violence in DCPS schools. We found that the Department of General Services (DGS) routinely did not complete safety- and security-related repairs within the required time frames, with half of all such repairs exceeding established deadlines. This infrastructure failure creates fundamental vulnerabilities that compromise student and staff safety.

Beyond physical security deficiencies, we identified systemic weaknesses including: the absence of a standardized definition of school gun violence across District agencies; reduced School Resource Officer coverage across DCPS schools; inconsistent implementation of safety measures across schools; and DCPS exclusion from some District-wide gun violence prevention initiatives.

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<sup>11</sup> See DYRS website, <https://oasis.dyrs.dc.gov/>.

<sup>12</sup> See Office of The Attorney General, Notice of Non-Competitive Funding document, <https://oag.dc.gov/sites/default/files/2024-01/Youth%20Violence%20Prevention%20Grant%20Program%20NOFA.pdf>.

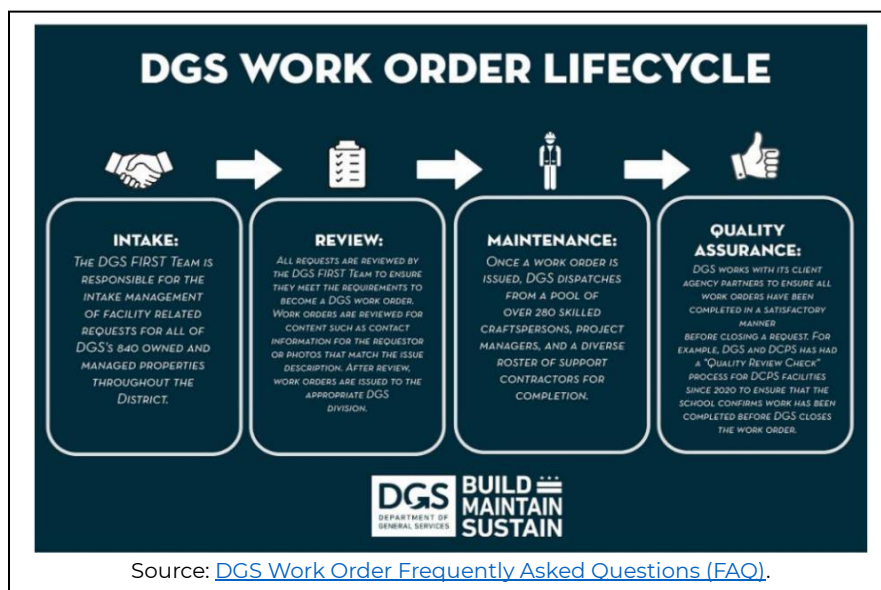
## Finding 1: DGS Routinely Did Not Complete School Safety- and Security-Related Repairs Timely

Our analysis revealed DGS' untimeliness in completing safety- and security-related repairs placed students and staff at risk for potential gun violence incidents. Examining repair data from 15 sampled schools and using the National Crime Prevention Council's School Safety and Security Toolkit as our framework,<sup>13</sup> we found widespread deficiencies in fundamental security components.<sup>14</sup>

### *Critical Role of DGS in School Security Infrastructure*

Under DC Code § 10–551.01(b)(4), DGS is responsible for providing building services, including maintenance and repairs for District-owned and occupied properties, including DCPS facilities. DGS' Facilities Intake Request Service Team Procedures Manual establishes clear timeframes for completing repairs:

- emergency repairs should be completed within 24 hours,
- priority repairs should be completed within ten days, and
- routine repairs should be completed within 45 days.<sup>15</sup>



<sup>13</sup> See National Crime Prevention Council website, [https://www.ncpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/NCPC\\_SchoolSafetyToolkit.pdf](https://www.ncpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/NCPC_SchoolSafetyToolkit.pdf).

<sup>14</sup> See Appendix 3, Scope and Methodology for a list of the 15 schools.

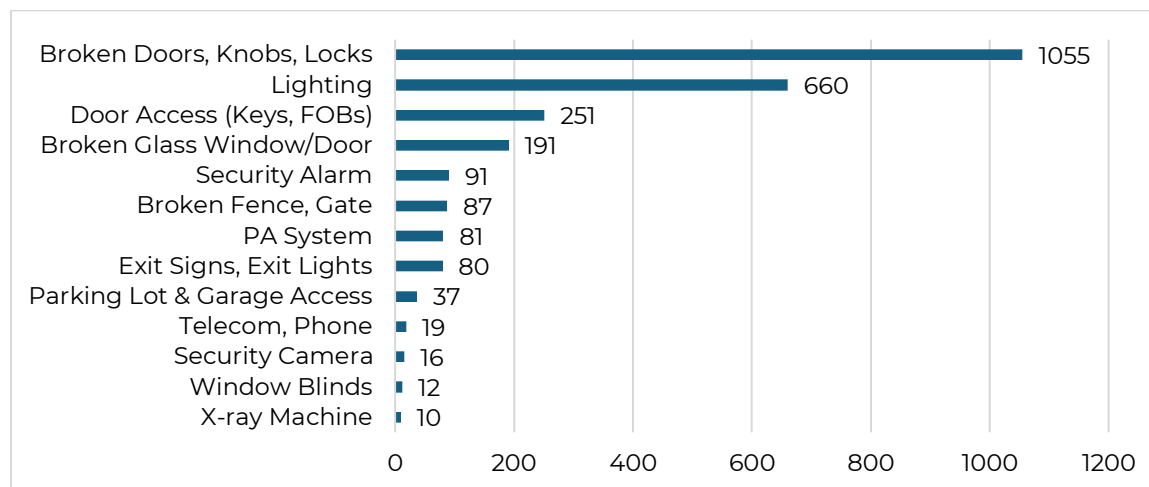
<sup>15</sup> District of Columbia Department of General Services, Facilities Intake Request Service Team Manual, Section 3: Creating a Work Order, 5 (2023).

Despite these established standards, our evaluation found that DGS did not consistently meet these requirements for safety- and security-related infrastructure repairs.

### ***Timeliness of School Safety- and Security-Related Repair Requests***

Our examination of DGS repair data maintained in its Salesforce work order system for school years 2021 and 2024 across the 15 sampled schools revealed that out of 9,302 total repair requests, 2,590 (28 percent) were directly related to safety and security features.

**Figure 2. Number of Repair Requests by Category**

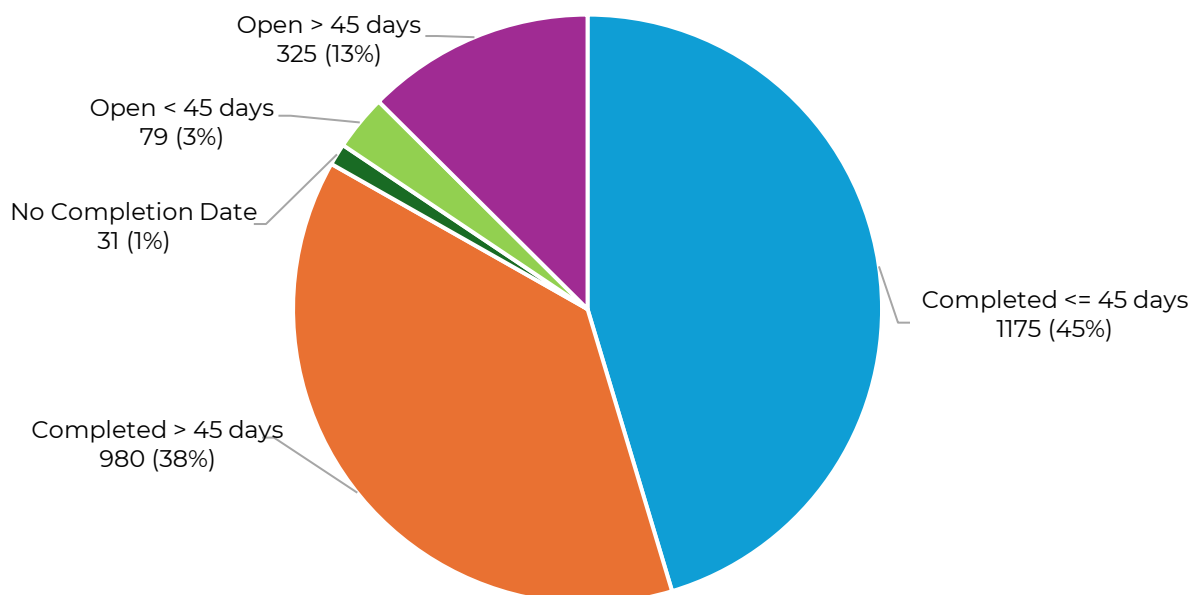


As shown in Figure 2, the most frequent safety- and security-related repairs involved broken doors, knobs, and locks (1,055 requests) lighting issues (660 requests), and door access problems involving keys and FOBs (251 requests). These elements are critical for securing building access points, ensuring proper surveillance, and deterrence.

Our analysis found that 1,305 of the 2,590 (50 percent) safety- and security-related repairs remained open beyond DGS' required maximum 45-day time limit. As shown in Figure 3, half of all identified security vulnerabilities persisted for extended periods, creating sustained exposure to potential threats.



**Figure 3. DGS Safety and Security Work Order Timeliness**



**Figure 4. Percentage of Safety- and Security-Related Repairs that Remained Open for More Than 45 Days, by Category**

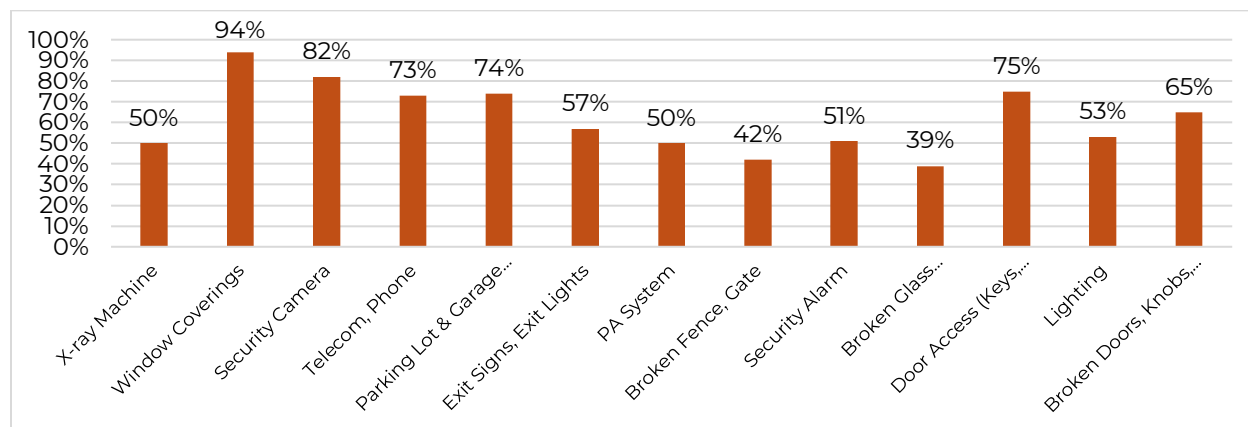


Figure 4, on the previous page, breaks down all work orders within DGS' Salesforce work order tracking system that remained open more than 45 days for school years 2021 through 2024. The data reveals some unaddressed repairs remained open across one or more school years.

- **75 percent of door access repairs** – critical for controlling who enters school buildings and preventing unauthorized access and

- **65 percent of door/lock repairs** – fundamental to securing classrooms and buildings during an emergency.

These delays directly compromise schools' ability to implement established security protocols and emergency response procedures in the event of a gun violence incident.

### ***Issues Contributing to Security Vulnerabilities***

Our analysis revealed several causal factors for the delayed or non-completion of some safety- and security-related repairs:

- **Poor data quality and tracking:** DGS' Salesforce work order system contains numerous record-keeping issues, including repairs marked as "completed" that were not completed, possible duplicative repair requests for the same issues, and miscategorized repair types. For example, DGS accepted two repair requests to fix a [REDACTED] door in a high school on consecutive dates and two repair requests to fix a [REDACTED] door in a high school on consecutive dates.
- **Confusion About Security Camera Repairs:** Despite DGS officials stating that they do not handle security camera repairs, our evaluation found multiple camera repair requests had been accepted into the DGS work order system. Some of these repairs were marked as completed while others were placed on hold for funding or procurement. This lack of clarity and delineation between responsibilities creates confusion about which entity is responsible for maintaining these essential security systems. Further, interviews with DCPS staff revealed widespread uncertainty about whether repairs should be submitted to DGS or the DCPS Work Order Maintenance Team, resulting in reporting gaps and delays.
- **Inconsistent classification and prioritization:** Similar repairs received different priority designations, with critical security elements sometimes miscategorized as routine repairs. For example, a PA system repair affecting certain classrooms was marked as high priority, while another PA system repair, submitted six days later, also affecting various classrooms throughout the building, was designated as routine priority. These inconsistencies create confusion about which repairs truly require urgent attention, make it difficult for schools to predict when essential safety features will be restored, and result in administrators developing workarounds rather than receiving timely repairs.
- **Ineffective quality assurance:** Despite DGS procedures requiring customer verification before closing work orders, school staff reported multiple instances where DGS marked repairs as complete without fixing the underlying problems. This resulted in DCPS staff needing to submit a new repair request for the same issue.

Further, the DGS Facilities Maintenance Team is responsible for reviewing all repair requests to ensure the correct assignment of repair category and appropriate prioritization. However,

DGS did not appear to have a process within its Salesforce system to identify redundant and recurring repair requests or verify that closed repairs were fully completed.

### ***Security Implications***

Delays in the timely completion of safety- and security-related repairs create immediate security risks that jeopardize student and staff safety. Our site visits documented:

- Multiple exterior doors that could not lock properly, creating unsecured access points;
- Inoperable PA systems in portions of buildings, preventing emergency communications during an emergency situation;
- Non-functional security cameras that remained broken for extended periods, eliminating surveillance capabilities; and
- Damaged windows and missing interior window coverings that would prevent proper implementation of lockdown protocols during a crisis.

When basic security infrastructure fails, even the most comprehensive emergency plans become ineffective. For example, during an active shooter event, a functioning door lock might be the only barrier between students and harm.

#### **Recommendation 1**

We recommend that the DGS Director:

Immediately prioritize and complete all existing and overdue safety- and security-critical repairs at DCPS schools.

#### **Management Feedback:**

Concur – Already Operational. In SmartDGS, every life-safety request (unsecured egress door, failed panic bar, broken window lock, perimeter breach, etc.) is automatically coded Emergency and drops onto the Emergency report issued each morning. DGS Facilities Operations reallocates field crews at the daily command-center stand-up until each ticket is closed

#### ***Our notes:***

*We consider this recommendation open and resolved, pending verification.*

**Recommendation 2**

We recommend that the DGS Director:

In consultation with the DCPS Chancellor, define what categories of repairs should be deemed safety- and security-related to DCPS public schools and determine whether a consistent priority level should be applied to these repair requests.

**Management Feedback:**

Concur – New Activity. A draft Safety & Security Classification Matrix maps repair types to the DGS priority hierarchy (Emergency / High / Routine) and flags work that is owned solely by the DCPS School Security Division (cameras, NVRs, access-control software). Once approved by both agencies, DGS will use this matrix to appropriately and consistently label DCPS safety and security needs in SmartDGS.

**Our notes:**

*We consider this recommendation open and resolved, pending verification.*

**Recommendation 3**

We recommend that the DGS Director:

Apply the definitions of categories and priority levels within the Salesforce work order system, or its successor system, resulting from implementation of Recommendation 2 to DCPS repair requests that are accepted and outstanding.

**Management Feedback:**

Concur – Already Operational. DGS personnel assign work order priorities—Emergency, High, or Routine—based on established criteria and the nature of the issue at intake. Pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 10–551.02(a)(3)(B), any issue involving exterior doors or designated egress pathways at DCPS schools is treated as a safety-critical repair and is prioritized accordingly. Intake staff are trained to follow this standard, and supervisory review ensures consistency.

**Our notes:**

*We consider this recommendation open and resolved, pending verification.*

**Recommendation 4**

We recommend that the DGS Director:

Establish a mechanism in the work order system (Salesforce) to flag or distinctly identify safety- and security-related repair requests and develop an automated alert system for repairs approaching deadline thresholds.

**Management Feedback:**

Concur – Already Operational. All Emergency tickets feed the live command-center dashboard. If “Work Started” is not logged within two business days, SmartDGS auto-pings the Area Manager; after three business days, the ticket escalates to Facilities Operations leadership via e-mail and Team

**Our notes:**

*We consider this recommendation open and resolved, pending verification.*

**Recommendation 5**

We recommend that the DGS Director:

Implement the requirement to track and monitor Salesforce entries on a regular and recurring basis to ensure that safety- and security-related repairs are completed within the timeframe for their established priority levels.

**Management Feedback:**

Concur – Already Operational. DGS actively monitors safety-related repairs as part of its daily operations. An Emergency Work Order Report is generated each morning and reviewed by Facilities Operations leadership to ensure timely assignment and follow-up. Emergency work orders are discussed in the daily coordination meeting, where supervisors and area managers provide status updates and coordinate next steps. Open tickets remain under active review until resolution.

**Our notes:**

*We consider this recommendation open and resolved, pending verification.*



## **Observation 1: The District Lacks a Definition or Common Understanding of Gun Violence Prevention in Schools**

Effective violence prevention requires clear definitions that allow for consistent tracking, measurement, and strategic response. Our evaluation revealed that the District of Columbia lacks a formal, standardized definition of what constitutes gun violence in schools and what parameters define "in school" incidents. From our interviews and document reviews, we found no District or DCPS literature providing a comprehensive description of gun violence, such as whether instances of threats, showing or brandishing a firearm, and suicide, for example, were considered acts of gun violence. This definitional gap undermines the District's ability to implement coherent prevention strategies, accurately track incidents, and measure effectiveness of prevention activities.

### ***Inconsistent Understanding Across Key Agencies***

When we requested each agency's definition of gun violence and specifically gun violence in schools, we received varying and sometimes contradictory responses:

- A DCPS official defined gun violence as "a violent act committed by an individual (juvenile or adult) with a firearm, in an attempt to cause mental anguish, intimidation, bodily harm by way of an assault, attempt to kill, [commit] suicide, accidental shooting, or mass shooting."<sup>16</sup> This definition, while comprehensive, is not codified in official policy documents or shared across other District agencies.
- An MPD official stated the agency does not maintain a formal definition of gun violence.
- DGS advised that defining gun violence falls outside their purview.

This lack of definitional consistency makes it challenging for these agencies to coordinate effectively on prevention, intervention, and response strategies.

### ***Ambiguity in "In-School" Parameters***

The challenges extend beyond defining "gun violence" itself to establishing clear boundaries of what constitutes "in-school" incidents. Our interviews and document reviews revealed:

- Some DCPS staff interpreted "in-school" to mean only incidents occurring inside school buildings and on school grounds.

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<sup>16</sup> Included in DCPS' written response provided to the OIG's inquiry.

- MPD may capture a school in its dispatching and reporting processes if the school is either the reported landmark or near a crime location, potentially overstating school-related incidents.
- No clear guidance exists on whether incidents occurring on school buses or at bus stops near schools qualify as "in-school" events.

This boundary ambiguity creates challenges in developing appropriate prevention strategies. For instance, if gun violence occurring on school buses is not tracked as "in-school" violence, transportation-specific prevention measures may be overlooked despite the importance to student safety.

### ***Consequences of Definitional Gaps***

The absence of standardized definitions creates cascading problems throughout the District's gun violence prevention infrastructure:

- **Evaluation barriers:** The District cannot effectively evaluate which prevention measures work without first defining what incidents qualify for tracking.
- **Data collection inconsistencies:** Without clear definitions, agencies are hindered from making trend analysis and cross-agency comparisons of school gun violence incidents.
- **Prevention strategy fragmentation:** Different understandings of what constitutes school gun violence may lead to uncoordinated and potentially conflicting prevention approaches across agencies.

The absence of a common, comprehensive definition of school gun violence undermines the foundation of prevention efforts in schools by preventing meaningful measurement, appropriate response, and effective prevention strategies that address the needs of DCPS public schools. To identify effective and comprehensive measures for reducing and preventing school gun incidents, DCPS and other District stakeholders should establish shared definitions of school gun violence that can be consistently applied across all relevant agencies and stakeholders.

### Opportunity for Improvement 1

DCPS can benefit from developing a comprehensive definition of school gun violence that aligns with MPD and other District stakeholder operations and is consistent with national standards.

#### Management Feedback:

DCPS agrees with this recommendation. By December 31, 2025, DCPS will meet with the MPD and the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety to discuss and understand their definition of 'gun violence'. Following the meeting and in alignment with national standards, DCPS will develop or adopt a definition for 'gun violence' by March 31, 2026.

### Observation 2: School Resource Officers Presence and Communication

District Code § 5-132.02 established the School Safety Division at MPD and its provision of school resource officers (SRO) to help provide for the safety of students and staff at DCPS and Public Charter schools. SROs were deployed throughout DCPS to foster positive relationships with students, prevent criminal activity in schools, and assist with crisis intervention.

#### *SRO Staffing Reductions Limit Coverage*

Our analysis revealed a substantial reduction in SRO staffing over recent years that has created coverage gaps across the District. The Reducing Law Enforcement Presence in Schools Amendment Act of 2021 provided for the elimination of the SRO program by July 1, 2025.<sup>17</sup> Although the School Resources Officers Act of 2023 repealed the requirement to eliminate the SRO program,<sup>18</sup> the program has not recovered to previous staffing levels.

The current SRO deployment presents a coverage deficit:

- For the 2023-2024 school year, MPD deployed 35 SROs.
- These 35 officers cover 61 middle and high schools (both public and charter).<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> [DC Act 24-159](#). Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Support Emergency Act of 2021 § 3082(b).

<sup>18</sup> [DC Act 25-176](#) at § 3012(b).

<sup>19</sup> MPD's SRO deployment information indicates that DCPS elementary schools are not part of the clusters/short beat deployment. (See <https://mpdc.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/mpdc/publication/attachments/SRO%20Deployment%20Report.pdf>)

Because SROs are deployed to public and public charter schools, 34 DCPS middle and high schools are left without a regular and recurring SRO presence and [REDACTED] did not have [REDACTED] SRO coverage – approximately 59% of DCPS' entire student population. Under the current staffing model, individual SROs divide their time among multiple schools and special assignments (if any), resulting in inconsistent school coverage.

### ***Benefits of Consistent SRO Presence***

During school site visits, school administrators consistently emphasized the value of regular SRO presence during our interviews. Before the SRO reduction, school officials observed several tangible benefits:

- SROs developed relationships with students, staff, and local community members.
- Regular SRO presence deterred violence such as fights between students that could escalate to more serious incidents.
- Students may be less likely to try to bring weapons to school when they knew officers would be present.

### ***Gaps in SRO Communication Practices***

Beyond SRO availability, school officials expressed concerns about:

- Unpredictable SRO visits without an understanding of the timing or duration, and
- Limited information sharing from the SROs about neighborhood crime or threats outside school hours that might affect school safety.

MPD interviewees confirmed these communication gaps, revealing that:

- SROs are not required to report to MPD administration the frequency or duration of their school visits,
- No formal requirement exists for SROs to report community incidents to school administrators, even when those incidents might affect school safety,

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[OSY24-25.pdf](#), last visited June 13, 2025.)<sup>20</sup> DCPS emergency response procedures require classroom windows to be covered during events such as active shooter situations, when possible, to prevent or limit sight into a classroom, thereby concealing potential victims and increasing student and staff chances of survival. See [https://esa.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/esa/publication/attachments/Emergency\\_Guide\\_August2017.pdf](https://esa.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/esa/publication/attachments/Emergency_Guide_August2017.pdf).

- SRO deployment schedules do not specify visit frequency, duration, or communication with school administrators, and
- An MPD official acknowledged these gaps, explaining that the department does not seek to be prescriptive about SRO duties and responsibilities. However, this official added that MPD is developing more formal measures to track SRO school visits.

In the context of school gun violence prevention, systematic information-sharing is essential for:

- Real-time threat intelligence exchange,
- Coordinated responses to emerging threats,
- Proactive identification of potential security risks, and
- Consistent implementation of safety protocols.

The combination of reduced SRO availability and current communication practices may create vulnerabilities in the District's school safety framework. While the SRO program remains a potentially valuable resource for preventing gun violence in schools, its current implementation does not maximize potential benefit across DCPS public schools.

#### **Opportunity for Improvement 2**

The Chancellor of DCPS should consider requesting the assistance of the MPD School Safety Division to conduct a DCPS-wide needs assessment for SRO deployments for future school years.

##### **Management feedback:**

DCPS agrees with this recommendation and is committed to completing this needs assessment by June 30, 2026.

While it is not common practice for MPD to weigh in on security personnel for DC Public Schools, DCPS has met with MPD and will collaborate with MPD to conduct a needs assessment and gather feedback to guide the appropriate allocation and deployment of law enforcement and security personnel—including School Resource Officers, DCPS Police, and Contract Security—based on [D]istrict needs and school-based incidents.

We also note that SROs are MPD employees, not DCPS employees; therefore, DCPS is not able to comment on or effectuate changes related to this employee group.



### **Opportunity for Improvement 3**

The Chancellor of DCPS should consider developing a formal, standard procedure with MPD, outlining the communication of SRO activities that are shared with DCPS administrators.

#### **Management feedback:**

DCPS agrees with this recommendation. Beginning September 2025, DCPS will engage with MPD and propose quarterly meetings to develop a communication strategy and establish a formal data-sharing process.

### **Observation 3: Inconsistencies in the Implementation of Safety- and Security-Related Activities**

While DCPS has established several essential safety and security measures across its schools, inconsistencies exist in how these measures are implemented. These variations create security gaps that could compromise the District's ability to prevent and respond to potential gun violence incidents.

#### ***Consistently Implemented Safety and Security Measures***

Through our school visits, we observed several safety and security protocols that DCPS has successfully standardized across its schools:

- DCPS consistently conducts regular safety drills, including evacuation, lockdown, shelter in place, and active shooter drills at all schools we visited. These drills familiarize students and staff with emergency procedures and create muscle memory for crisis response.
- Middle and high schools uniformly employ scanners and metal detectors at entrances, providing a standardized screening mechanism for weapons detection.
- Schools have established clear weapons abatement procedures that staff understand and can implement when prohibited items are discovered.
- Schools maintain appropriate role distinction between DCPS police, contracted security guards, and School Resource Officers, minimizing confusion about responsibilities during security incidents.

These consistent practices demonstrate DCPS's commitment to creating safe learning environments and establishing baseline security protocols.

### **Implementation Inconsistencies**

Despite these strengths, our evaluation identified several critical safety measures that varied significantly across schools or were implemented inconsistently:

- **Cell phone policies:** Schools lack a standardized approach to student cell phones on campuses. Some schools permit cell phones in classrooms while others require collection upon entry. This inconsistency affects both emergency communication capabilities and the ability to prevent the escalation of social media-fueled conflicts between students;
- [REDACTED];
- **Window coverings:** Schools employ varying approaches to classroom window coverings, which are critical during lockdowns. Some classroom windows and glass door panels have coverings while others rely on makeshift solutions like taping paper across door windows. This inconsistency could compromise classroom security during an active shooter situation;<sup>20</sup> and
- **Visitor access procedures:** Visitor management procedures showed variation. During our visits, not all schools required us to wear visitor badges or sign-out when leaving. This inconsistency creates potential security gaps in tracking building occupants during emergencies. We found that DCPS's School Visitor Policy dates to January 2017 and may be outdated.<sup>21</sup>

While schools' policies and practices may align with current requirements, the GAO Green Book states that management should periodically review its policies, procedures, and activities to support relevancy and effectiveness for achieving organizational goals and addressing risks.<sup>22</sup> Further, the Green Book recommends management should perform

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<sup>20</sup> DCPS emergency response procedures require classroom windows to be covered during events such as active shooter situations, when possible, to prevent or limit sight into a classroom, thereby concealing potential victims and increasing student and staff chances of survival. See [https://esa.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/esa/publication/attachments/Emergency\\_Guide\\_August2017.pdf](https://esa.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/esa/publication/attachments/Emergency_Guide_August2017.pdf).

<sup>21</sup> DCPS, Chancellor's Directive 260.2, School Visitor Policy (Jan. 2017), [https://dcps.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dcps/publication/attachments/DCPS\\_School-Visitors-Directive.pdf](https://dcps.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dcps/publication/attachments/DCPS_School-Visitors-Directive.pdf).

<sup>22</sup> GAO Green Book § 12.05.

monitoring activities to ensure effective design, implementation, and operation. Effective monitoring could ensure uniform compliance across DCPS' campuses.

### ***Security Implications of Inconsistent Implementation***

Variations in implementation directly affect the District's ability to provide consistent protection against gun violence for all students and staff. While some adaptation to individual school needs is appropriate, core security protocols should support consistency to ensure equitable protection throughout DCPS public schools. Without standardized implementation, DCPS cannot effectively evaluate which security measures prevent incidents and which need improvement.

Standardizing security elements across DCPS would strengthen the District's overall approach to preventing and responding to potential gun violence incidents while still allowing for customization based on each school's unique needs and circumstances.

#### **Opportunity for Improvement 4**

The Chancellor of DCPS should review and update the January 2017 School Visitor Policy, as needed, to ensure the policy reflects current DCPS-wide requirements and best practices.

#### **Management feedback:**

DCPS concurs with this recommendation and is currently reviewing and revising the School Visitors Policy. The updated policy will be effectuated August 2025 for school year 2025-2026.

#### **Opportunity for Improvement 5**

The Chancellor of DCPS should assess safety- and security-related elements across DCPS public schools to identify and address inconsistencies and vulnerabilities.

#### **Management feedback:**

DCPS agrees with this recommendation and is currently researching additional measures to identify safety and security across DC public schools. DCPS coordinates a cross-office response to each significant safety or security incident. This approach to following up with schools after an incident includes supporting their analysis of any student behavior-related components, gaps in adult systems, and practices that could have mitigated the incident from happening. The focus on this support is to minimize the likelihood that a safety or security related incident will happen again.

Beginning January 30, 2026, DCPS will implement an annual comprehensive review process to identify the top three incident trends from the previous school year. While the

specific types of incidents may vary, DCPS will proactively ensure that schools are equipped with the necessary resources and support to respond effectively.

Simultaneously, DCPS will collaborate with the Department of General Services (DGS) to conduct risk assessment walkthroughs of school facilities. Prior to the start of these walkthroughs, DCPS will engage with DGS to align the overarching goals of the assessments and to establish a shared understanding of the key areas and criteria to be evaluated. These walkthroughs aim to identify potential facilities-related vulnerabilities that could impact the overall safety and security of school environments

#### **Observation 4: DCPS was Not Identified as a Strategizing Partner in Some District Gun Violence Prevention Efforts**

Our evaluation revealed that DCPS had been omitted from some District-wide gun violence prevention initiatives despite its critical role in student safety. The *DC Gun Violence Reduction Strategic Plan* identified specific risk factors that affect DCPS students and could lead to their future involvement in gun violence. However, without including DCPS as a strategic partner and addressing these risk factors that apply to the student population, District-wide response plans may be less effective. This omission created coordination gaps that could undermine both school-specific and community-wide violence prevention efforts.

##### ***Exclusion from Initiatives***

We identified District violence prevention strategies and governance structures that did not include DCPS as a strategizing partner:

- **Mayor's Order 2021-22:** Establishment and Activation of the Gun Violence Prevention Emergency Operations Center to Respond to the Gun Violence Public Health Crisis, directed the Emergency Operations Center to mobilize a comprehensive coalition of stakeholders to develop gun violence prevention strategies. This coalition included District government agencies, federal criminal justice agencies, community-based organizations, private-sector employers, faith-based institutions, and philanthropic organizations. A majority of the District's educational cluster, including the Deputy Mayor for Education, the Office of the State Superintendent, and DCPS, were not included in the stakeholder coalition, despite schools being central environments for youth safety and development.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> See Mayor's Order 2021-22 (Feb. 17, 2021), <https://mayor.dc.gov/publication/mayors-order-2021-22-establishment-and-activation-gun-violence-prevention>.

- **DC Code § 7–2510.13:**<sup>24</sup> Established the Extreme Risk Protection Order Implementation Working Group to improve awareness of and develop policies and procedures governing extreme risk protection orders, which are court-issued when someone with a gun poses a danger to themselves or others.<sup>25</sup> The working group included multiple District government members (Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice, MPD, ONSE, DYRS, Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants, Criminal Justice Coordination Council), community members (Everytown, Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions, Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America’s DC Chapter, DC Behavioral Health Association), and violence interruption contractors from ONSE and OAG’s Cure the Streets. No educational entity – to include DCPS – has been statutorily defined as a participant on this working group.

### ***Consequences of DCPS Omission***

In addition to the coalition and working group, the absence of DCPS from similar planning and coordination activities may contribute to a less comprehensive gun violence strategy for the District, including:

- **Missed experiential insights:** DCPS officials have firsthand knowledge of how gun violence affects students, staff, and educational environments. Without their participation, planning groups lack perspectives from education professionals working directly with affected youth.
- **Duplicated efforts:** Without DCPS representation in District-wide initiatives, agencies may develop strategies that duplicate existing school efforts, wasting limited resources and creating potential implementation conflicts.
- **Resource allocation inefficiencies:** DCPS may independently allocate resources to gun violence prevention efforts already being addressed by other District agencies, creating redundancies while leaving other needs unaddressed.
- **Communication barriers:** Without formal representation in planning bodies, DCPS may not receive prompt information about new initiatives, available resources, or emerging best practices being implemented elsewhere in the District.

Strategies for DCPS that are developed without the agency’s involvement may prove difficult to implement effectively in school settings, reducing their impact on student safety. This omission of DCPS from planning processes risks developing strategies primarily from a law

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<sup>24</sup> See DC Code § 7–2510.13(e). While applicable during this evaluation, this provision expired on April 1, 2025.

<sup>25</sup> Extreme Risk Protection Orders: When Someone with a Gun is a Danger to Themselves or Others. <https://ovsjg.dc.gov/page/extreme-risk-protection-orders>.



enforcement or public health perspective rather than recognizing schools as central environments for both prevention and intervention.

#### **Opportunity for Improvement 6**

The Chancellor of DCPS should coordinate with stakeholders such as EOM, OGVP, OSSE, and ONSE to ensure DCPS officials are engaged in gun violence reduction efforts involving the District's public schools.

#### **Management feedback:**

DCPS agrees with this recommendation. By March 2026, DCPS will consult with agency partners to evaluate and consider establishing a working group focused on curbing violence involving DC Public Schools.

## **MANAGEMENT RESPONSES**

Both DGS and DCPS agreed with all of our recommendations and opportunities for improvement. Their complete responses are included in Appendix 5.

### **DGS Response to Infrastructure Repair Findings**

DGS agreed with our five recommendations to improve the timeliness of safety- and security-related repairs. However, their responses focused primarily on repairs designated as "Emergency" priority level, while our analysis examined all safety- and security-related repairs regardless of assigned priority level.

#### ***Key clarifications regarding DGS responses:***

DGS stated that all life-safety requests are "automatically coded Emergency" and addressed through daily emergency protocols. However, our analysis of DGS' own database revealed that of the 2,590 accepted safety- and security-related repairs we identified, only 22 (1%) were coded as Emergency priority, 251 (10%) as High priority, and 2,317 (89%) as Routine priority. For example, we found a December 2023 repair request for an exterior door with a malfunctioning security lock—explicitly described as a "SECURITY BREACH"—that was coded as Routine priority rather than Emergency.

This discrepancy underscores a central finding of our evaluation: the fundamental issue is not DGS's response time to Emergency repairs, but rather the systematic inability to properly identify, categorize, and prioritize safety- and security-related repairs that are critical for gun violence prevention. Our recommendations address this gap by calling for standardized definitions and consistent prioritization of all safety- and security-related repairs.

### **DCPS Response to Coordination and Implementation Opportunities**

DCPS agreed with all six opportunities for improvement, providing specific timelines for implementation ranging from August 2025 to June 2026. Their responses demonstrate a commitment to:

- Developing standardized definitions of gun violence in coordination with MPD and other District agencies
- Conducting comprehensive needs assessments for security personnel deployment
- Establishing formal communication protocols with MPD
- Updating visitor policies and conducting systematic security assessments
- Engaging with District-wide gun violence prevention initiatives

### **Ongoing Monitoring**

We will monitor the implementation of these recommendations through our annual reporting process, with findings shared with the Council and Mayor. The fundamental challenges identified in this evaluation—delayed infrastructure repairs, definitional gaps, reduced security presence, inconsistent implementation, and coordination deficiencies—require sustained attention to ensure meaningful progress in protecting DC students and staff from gun violence.

## **CONCLUSION**

The District of Columbia has shown a clear commitment to protecting its youth through multiple implemented strategies, programs, and initiatives aimed at reducing gun violence across the city. The safety of DCPS's students and staff is paramount. This evaluation revealed vulnerabilities that may undermine the District's school safety framework, and highlighted areas for enhancement of school gun violence prevention measures. The rate of untimely safety- and security-related repairs represents breakdowns that can make even well-designed gun violence prevention strategies ineffective. When doors cannot be locked, communication systems fail, and security cameras are non-functional, students and staff face potential risks. This challenge connects directly to our findings in ways that compound vulnerabilities:

- Without standardized definitions of "school gun violence," the District lacks the metrics needed to prioritize repairs based on actual safety impact and evaluate prevention effectiveness.
- The reduction in School Resource Officer staffing created coverage gaps across the District, leaving most schools without regular officer presence.

- The inconsistent implementation of security measures among schools suggests the absence of a unified safety standard.
- DCPS's exclusion from key District-wide gun violence prevention initiatives creates a disconnect between school-specific safety measures and broader community efforts.

In furtherance of the District's overall efforts to combat gun violence, DCPS and other District government agencies and stakeholders can establish a more consistent and effective approach to preventing gun violence incidents in DC public schools that address the needs of its students and communities. The persistent threat of gun violence disrupts not only physical safety but the entire educational experience. By addressing the identified gaps and strengthening coordination among agencies, the District can create safer learning environments where students and staff can focus on education rather than fears about their security.



## APPENDIX 1. FINDINGS

Table of Findings

No.	Finding
1	DGS Routinely Did Not Complete School Safety- and Security-Related Repairs Timely



## APPENDIX 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

## Table of Recommendations

Agency	No.	Recommendation	Status	Action Required	Finding
DGS	1	Immediately prioritize and complete all existing and overdue safety- and security-critical repairs at DCPS schools.	<b>Resolved</b>	Tracking implementation	1
DGS	2	In consultation with the DCPS Chancellor, define what categories of repairs should be deemed safety- and security-related to DCPS public schools and determine whether a consistent priority level should be applied to these repair requests.	<b>Resolved</b>	Tracking implementation	1
DGS	3	Apply the definitions of categories and priority levels within the Salesforce work order system, or its successor system, resulting from implementation of Recommendation 2 to DCPS repair requests that are accepted and outstanding.	<b>Resolved</b>	Tracking implementation	1
DGS	4	Establish a mechanism in the work order system (Salesforce) to flag or distinctly identify safety- and security-related repair requests and develop an automated alert system for repairs approaching deadline thresholds.	<b>Resolved</b>	Tracking implementation	1
DGS	5	Implement the requirement to track and monitor Salesforce entries on a regular and recurring basis to ensure that safety- and security-related repairs are completed within the timeframe for their established priority levels.	<b>Resolved</b>	Tracking implementation	1



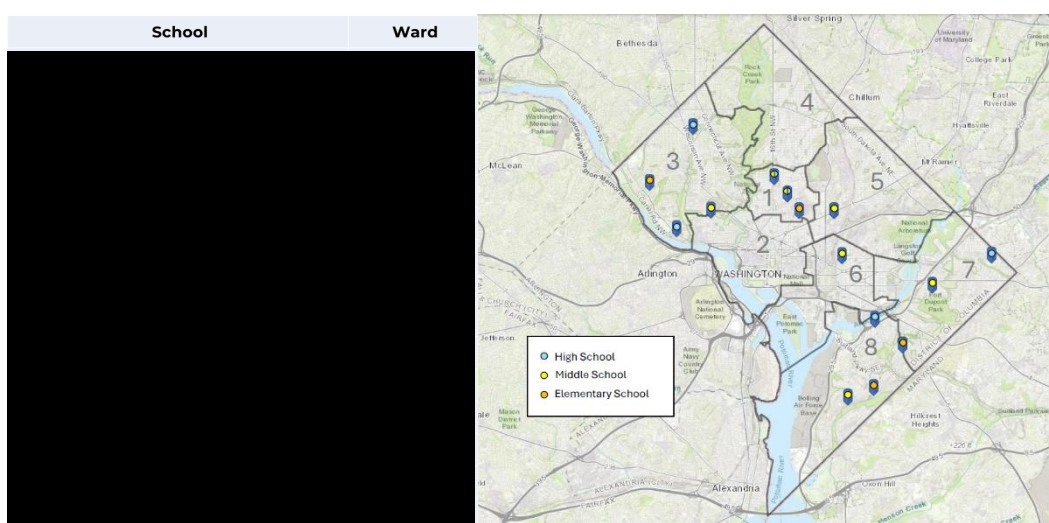


## APPENDIX 3. SCOPE & METHODOLOGY

## Scope

Gun violence prevention takes form in various ways including policy and legislation, community awareness and engagement, law enforcement, and behavioral health assistance. For this evaluation, OIG did not explore mental/behavioral health strategies for combatting gun violence in DC schools but recognize that as a component of a comprehensive approach.

We limited this evaluation to DCPS public schools only. We used a sample of 15 of the 117 DCPS schools for our evaluation. We examined gun violence prevention, intervention, and reduction activities for school years 2021 through 2023.



## Methodology

This evaluation was included in our OIG Annual Audit and Inspection Plan for fiscal year 2024. We issued our engagement letter on October 26, 2023, and conducted this evaluation from October 2023 through July 2024 in accordance with CIGIE Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation. Those standards require that we plan and perform the evaluation to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence that provides a reasonable basis for our findings, conclusions, and recommendations based on the evaluation objective. We conducted site visits at all schools within our sample, which were selected by a random sample representing a mix of elementary, middle, and high schools, to observe physical safety and security attributes within and exterior to the school buildings.

In May 2024, we received a spreadsheet of school repairs for the 15 schools for fiscal years 2021 – (May) 2024 and analyzed these repairs to identify and extract those that were safety- and security-related based on the National Crime Prevention Council's School Safety and Security Toolkit. We reviewed District and national studies, standards, and best practices. We examined documents and interviewed DCPS, MPD, DGS, and OGVP personnel to understand the policies, procedures, and activities related to the objectives. We met with DCPS, MPD,

and DGS officials to discuss our findings and recommendations, answer any questions, and receive their feedback regarding our findings and conclusions.



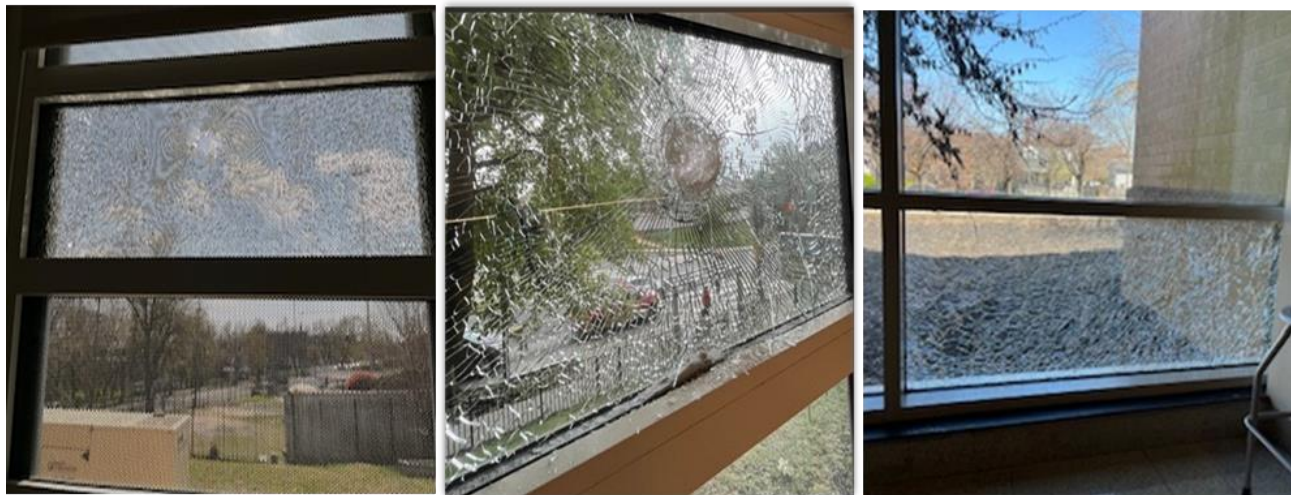
## APPENDIX 4. IMAGES OF NEEDED SCHOOL SAFETY- AND SECURITY- RELATED REPAIRS

A selection of photographs taken of various compromised safety- and security-related protections during our visits to the 15 DCPS public schools:

**Broken Doors/Door Locks:**



**Shattered Windows from Gunshots:**





**Windows Remain Painted to Mask Gunshots:**



**Compromised Perimeter Fencing:**





## APPENDIX 5. MANAGEMENT RESPONSES



July 11, 2025

Daniel W. Lucas  
Inspector General  
100 M Street, SE Suite 1000  
Washington, D.C. 20003

Dear Inspector General Lucas,

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) is in receipt of your June 16, 2025, Evaluation Report entitled, *Measures to Combat Gun Violence in DC Public Schools, OIG No. 24-E-01-GA0*. Thank you for the report and for allowing our agency to respond. We also appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), the Department of General Services (DGS), and the Deputy Mayor of Education (DME) on this important work. We stand in partnership to complete security related repairs and strengthen strategies and support to protect students and staff.

This letter provides DCPS' responses to the six areas of improvement presented in the evaluation report.

**OIG RECOMMENDATIONS and DCPS RESPONSES:**

***Recommendation 1: DCPS can benefit from developing a comprehensive definition of school gun violence that aligns with MPD and other District stakeholder operations and is consistent with national standards.***

DCPS agrees with this recommendation. By December 31, 2025, DCPS will meet with the MPD and the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety to discuss and understand their definition of 'gun violence'. Following the meeting and in alignment with national standards, DCPS will develop or adopt a definition for 'gun violence' by March 31, 2026.

***Recommendation 2: The Chancellor of DCPS should consider requesting the assistance of the MPD School Safety Division to conduct a DCPS-wide needs assessment for SRO deployments for future school years.***

DCPS agrees with this recommendation and is committed to completing this needs assessment by June 30, 2026.

While it is not common practice for MPD to weigh in on security personnel for DC Public Schools, DCPS has met with MPD and will collaborate with MPD to conduct a needs assessment and gather feedback to guide the appropriate allocation and deployment of law enforcement and security personnel—including School Resource Officers, DCPS Police, and Contract Security—based on district needs and school-based incidents.

We also note that SROs are MPD employees, not DCPS employees; therefore, DCPS is not able to comment on or effectuate changes related to this employee group.



***Recommendation 3: The Chancellor of DCPS should consider developing a formal, standard procedure with MPD, outlining the communication of SRO activities that are shared with DCPS administrators.***

DCPS agrees with this recommendation. Beginning September 2025, DCPS will engage with MPD and propose quarterly meetings to develop a communication strategy and establish a formal data-sharing process.

***Recommendation 4: The Chancellor of DCPS should review and update the January 2017 School Visitor Policy, as needed, to ensure the policy reflects current DCPS-wide requirements and best practices.***

DCPS concurs with this recommendation and is currently reviewing and revising the School Visitors Policy. The updated policy will be effectuated August 2025 for school year 2025-2026.

***Recommendation 5: The Chancellor of DCPS should assess safety- and security-related elements across DCPS public schools to identify and address inconsistencies and vulnerabilities.***

DCPS agrees with this recommendation and is currently researching additional measures to identify safety and security across DC public schools. DCPS coordinates a cross-office response to each significant safety or security incident. This approach to following up with schools after an incident includes supporting their analysis of any student behavior-related components, gaps in adult systems, and practices that could have mitigated the incident from happening. The focus on this support is to minimize the likelihood that a safety or security related incident will happen again.

Beginning January 30, 2026, DCPS will implement an annual comprehensive review process to identify the top three incident trends from the previous school year. While the specific types of incidents may vary, DCPS will proactively ensure that schools are equipped with the necessary resources and support to respond effectively.

Simultaneously, DCPS will collaborate with the Department of General Services (DGS) to conduct risk assessment walkthroughs of school facilities. Prior to the start of these walkthroughs, DCPS will engage with DGS to align the overarching goals of the assessments and to establish a shared understanding of the key areas and criteria to be evaluated. These walkthroughs aim to identify potential facilities-related vulnerabilities that could impact the overall safety and security of school environments.

***Recommendation 6: The Chancellor of DCPS should coordinate with stakeholders such as EOM, OGVP, OSSE, and ONSE to ensure DCPS officials are engaged in gun violence reduction efforts involving the District's public schools.***

DCPS agrees with this recommendation. By March 2026, DCPS will consult with agency partners to evaluate and consider establishing a working group focused on curbing violence involving DC Public Schools.

Inspector Lucas, we appreciate the opportunity to respond to the evaluation report. It allowed us to collaborate with DGS, MPD, and the DME to discuss and implement additional measures to strengthen

supports that mitigate violence involving DC Public Schools. We remain committed to keeping students and school communities safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lewis D. Ferebee". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lewis" and last name "Ferebee" being more prominent than the middle initial "D.".

Lewis D. Ferebee, Ed.D.  
Chancellor

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES



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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Daniel W. Lucas, Inspector General, District of Columbia  
**FROM:** Delano Hunter, Director, DGS  
**CC:** Dr. Lewis Ferebee, Chancellor, DCPS  
**DATE:** July 2, 2025  
**SUBJECT:** DGS Management Response to OIG Draft Report – *Measures to Combat Gun Violence in DC Public Schools* (OIG No. 24-E-01-GA0)

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**Purpose**

This memorandum conveys the Department of General Services’ (DGS) formal response to the findings and recommendations directed to our agency in the subject report. We appreciate the Office of the Inspector General’s (OIG) review and share the urgency to keep students, educators, and school communities safe.

We value the opportunity to collaborate with our District government partners at DC Public Schools (DCPS), the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), and the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME) to strengthen measures to mitigate violence in schools. DGS remains committed to timely execution of safety- and security-critical repairs within our facility management mandate, which includes all 117 DCPS schools. We acknowledge the gravity of violence in and around school settings and reaffirm our role in ensuring that the built environment—entry points, door hardware, perimeter barriers, and critical building systems—supports the overall safety posture led by DCPS.

**Clarifying DGS Scope of Responsibility**

To contextualize our response, it is important to distinguish DGS’ operational scope from that of DCPS and its School Security Division:

**DGS Responsibility**

- Door hardware and locks
- Panic bars, door closers, secure window systems
- Emergency lighting
- Site fencing, gates, structural barriers
- Power supply and cabling for access systems
- Public address systems

**DCPS Responsibility**

- Security camera systems and intercoms at access points
- NVR/DVR units and video storage
- Remote access control (fobs, keypads, biometric)
- Surveillance software and live monitoring
- Security staff deployment and response protocols

DGS does not install, configure, monitor, or maintain electronic surveillance systems (e.g., cameras, door readers, intercoms). However, when a facility repair intersects with security functionality—such as a powered door tied to an access system—we coordinate closely with DCPS Security to ensure seamless service. DCPS follows DCPS’ established safety and security posture regarding window shades and coverings, supporting repair and replacement per the client agency’s request.

**About SmartDGS**

SMART DGS is the District government’s enterprise work-order and asset-management platform, giving agencies a single portal to request service, track progress, and view facility data in real time. Built on Salesforce, it routes tickets by priority and trade, captures labor and material costs, and feeds live dashboards that drive key performance indicator (KPI) reporting for uptime, response time, and backlog reduction.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES



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### Security Repair Response Framework

DGS operates under a structured work order prioritization and monitoring model tailored to flag security related issues, including at DCPS facilities. Our key controls include:

- **Work Order Triage and Prioritization:**  
All life-safety issues—including compromised doors, damaged locks, failed emergency lighting, broken fencing, or unsafe windows—are categorized as **Emergency or High Priority** in SmartDGS. These are subject to same-day dispatch and a 72-hour service level agreement (SLA) for resolution. If a permanent fix is not achievable in the initial 72 hours, DGS mitigates any immediate threats to safety or security, provides any necessary stop gap measures while long term repairs are underway.
- **DGS Daily Operational Review:**  
Each morning, a real-time "Hot Sheet" of open **Emergency** tickets is generated and distributed to the Operations stakeholders. Field teams are re-tasked daily to focus on these items, and unresolved requests are tracked until resolved.
- **SLA Escalation Protocols:**  
SmartDGS automatically issues alerts post-submission on all **Emergency** work order requests. These alerts go to DGS Area Managers, Directors, and in extreme cases, the DGS Executive Team for real-time triage.
- **Oversight & Quality Assurance:**  
DGS ensures quality assurance through layered supervisory review and system-based accountability. When an **Emergency** repair is completed, technicians are required to upload completion notes and "after" photos to the SmartDGS work order record. A **Zone Manager or Area Supervisor** reviews the documentation for completeness and accuracy. Work orders cannot be closed without supervisory validation in the system. Additionally, the requestor (typically a DCPS engineer or school-based staff member) has the opportunity to confirm the issue has been resolved before final closeout.
- **Continuous Analytics & Public Accountability:**  
DGS tracks work order volume, SLA compliance, average aging, and issue recurrence. DGS provides a monthly memo on Safety and Security compliance at DCPS locations and shares with internal and external stakeholders, including DC Council, Committee on Facilities and Family Services pursuant to **DC Official Code 10-551.02(a)(3)(B)**.

### Commitment to Implementation

DGS shares the OIG's overarching goal of safer schools, but we note that the bulk of the cited "gaps" are already closed by existing SmartDGS controls, daily Hot Sheet governance, and SLA-driven escalation. DGS is well-prepared to address any outstanding needs quickly and transparently. The following table illustrates what operating procedures DGS already has in place and the few items that remain. DGS is committed to the effective use of data to monitor and measure its performance in all areas, including the agency's ability to swiftly address the security needs of client agencies such as DCPS.

We appreciate the OIG's spotlight on this mission-critical space and look forward to continuing a fact-based dialogue.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES



**DGS MANAGEMENT RESPONSES TO OIG RECOMMENDATIONS**

	OIG Recommendation	DGS Response
1	Immediately prioritize and complete all existing and overdue safety- and security-critical repairs at DCPS schools.	<b>Concur – Already Operational.</b> In <b>SmartDGS</b> , every life-safety request (unsecured egress door, failed panic bar, broken window lock, perimeter breach, etc.) is automatically coded <b>Emergency</b> and drops onto the <b>Emergency report</b> issued each morning. DGS Facilities Operations reallocates field crews at the daily command-center stand-up until each ticket is closed.
2	In consultation with the DCPS Chancellor, define categories of safety/security repairs and determine if a consistent priority level should apply.	<b>Concur – New Activity.</b> A draft <b>Safety &amp; Security Classification Matrix</b> maps repair types to the DGS priority hierarchy ( <b>Emergency / High / Routine</b> ) and flags work that is owned solely by the DCPS School Security Division (cameras, NVRs, access-control software). Once approved by both agencies, DGS will use this matrix to appropriately and consistently label DCPS safety and security needs in SmartDGS.
3	Apply the definitions and priority levels in SmartDGS to all accepted and outstanding DCPS work orders.	<b>Concur – Already Operational.</b> DGS personnel assign work order priorities— <b>Emergency, High, or Routine</b> —based on established criteria and the nature of the issue at intake. Pursuant to <b>D.C. Official Code § 10–551.02(a)(3)(B)</b> , any issue involving <b>exterior doors or designated egress pathways</b> at DCPS schools is treated as a <b>safety-critical repair</b> and is prioritized accordingly. Intake staff are trained to follow this standard, and supervisory review ensures consistency.
4	Flag safety/security repair requests and create alerts for aging work orders.	<b>Concur – Already Operational.</b> All <b>Emergency</b> tickets feed the live command-center dashboard. If “Work Started” is not logged within two business days, SmartDGS auto-pings the Area Manager; after three business days, the ticket escalates to Facilities Operations leadership via e-mail and Teams.
5	Implement a recurring monitoring system to track safety/security tickets.	<b>Concur – Already Operational.</b> DGS actively monitors safety-related repairs as part of its daily operations. An <b>Emergency Work Order Report</b> is generated each morning and reviewed by Facilities Operations leadership to ensure timely assignment and follow-up. Emergency work orders are discussed in the daily coordination meeting, where supervisors and area managers provide status updates and coordinate next steps. Open tickets remain under active review until resolution.

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**FY 24-FY25 YTD DCPS Security Emergency Work Orders SLA Performance (Completed Tickets)**

SLA Status	Work Order Status	Record Count	% of Completed WOs
Within SLA	Completed	117	86.67%
Out of SLA	Completed	18	13.33%

(Data: FY24-25 DCPS Security, Life and Safety Emergency Requests)

Of the total completed emergency work orders reviewed, **86.67% were resolved within the established service level agreement (SLA) window. Only 13.33% were completed outside of SLA**, reflecting strong operational responsiveness. This performance indicates effective triage and timely dispatch of high-priority safety-related repairs, with clear supervisory oversight and follow-through. DGS continues to focus on reducing the small percentage of overdue closures through daily reviews and targeted escalation when necessary.

**Legacy Work Order Aging by Fiscal Year**

The data below illustrates a consistent and accelerating reduction in the average aging of legacy work orders by fiscal year requested. From FY22 to FY25, the average number of days aged per ticket has declined by over 80%, indicating improved prioritization, faster triage, and sustained field execution. Notably, the most significant improvement occurred between FY24 and FY25, with a 64.4% year-over-year decrease in average aging. This trend reflects DGS' focused efforts to address older, safety-critical tickets and reduce long-standing backlog through daily operational oversight and increased accountability. Recent investments in dedicated work order reduction funding contribute to measurable backlog reduction and faster response times for new work order requests.

Fiscal Year	Record Count	Average Aging (Days)	Median Aging (Days)	% Decrease in Avg. Aging (YoY)
2022	3,008	190	49	—
2023	2,764	160	78	15.8%
2024	2,171	104	34	35.0%
2025	1,021	37	14	64.4%

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### SMART DGS Alert Log

This alert log captures all active and recently submitted **Emergency and High Priority work orders** for DCPS facilities. It provides real-time visibility into critical service requests, including agency priority level, location, status, assigned work team, and a visual **Priority Alert** indicator. The log is used daily by DGS Facilities Operations to track aging requests, coordinate crew assignments, and escalate unresolved issues that require an urgent response. This tool plays a central role in ensuring high-priority repairs are monitored and addressed without delay.

Work Orders

DCPS Emergency/High Alert Log

150+ Items • Sorted by Date Requested • 7 Filters Applied • Updated a few seconds ago

Search this list...

	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Agency Priority	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> A...	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Date Requested	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Work Order No	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Location Name	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Status*	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Work Team Code	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Problem type	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Priority Alert
1	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> High	<div></div>	6/26/2025	825749		Approved	CARPENTRY	Lock and Door	<div></div>
2	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> High	<div></div>	6/26/2025	825742		Approved	ELECTRICAL	Lighting	<div></div>
3	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> High	<div></div>	6/26/2025	825737		Issued and in Process	GEN CONTRACT SERVICES	Fire Extinguisher	<div></div>
4	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Emergency	<div></div>	6/26/2025	825734		Approved	BPO-HVAC	Leak	<div></div>
5	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> High	<div></div>	6/26/2025	825698		Issued and in Process	WARRANTY	FLOORING	<div></div>
6	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> High	<div></div>	6/26/2025	825673		Approved	GEN CONTRACT SERVICES	Window	<div></div>
7	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> High	<div></div>	6/25/2025	825626		Approved	CARPENTRY	Lock and Door (Interior Services)	<div></div>
8	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> High	<div></div>	6/25/2025	825583		Approved	GROUPS	JANITORIAL	<div></div>
9	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> High	<div></div>	6/25/2025	825518		Issued and in Process	BPO-REGION 05	Cooling	<div></div>
10	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> High	<div></div>	6/24/2025	825427		Issued and in Process	CMC EXCEL ACADEMY	Cooling	<div></div>
11	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Emergency	<div></div>	6/23/2025	825236		Issued and in Process	ENVIRONMENTAL	Odor	<div></div>
12	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Emergency	<div></div>	6/23/2025	825232		Issued and in Process	GEN CONTRACT SERVICES	Power	<div></div>
13	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> High	<div></div>	6/23/2025	825165		Issued and in Process	BPO-REGION 02	Cooling	<div></div>
14	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> High	<div></div>	6/23/2025	825124		Approved	GEN CONTRACT SERVICES	Electronic Security Issue	<div></div>
15	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> High	<div></div>	6/23/2025	825101		Approved	PLUMBING	Leak	<div></div>
16	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Emergency	<div></div>	6/20/2025	824950		Issued and in Process	BPO-REGION 03	Cooling	<div></div>
17	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Emergency	<div></div>	6/20/2025	824906		Completed	HVAC	Cooling	<div></div>
18	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> High	<div></div>	6/20/2025	824904		Issued and in Process	BPO-REGION 03	Cooling (HVAC Services)	<div></div>

Recent Items

Chatter Feed

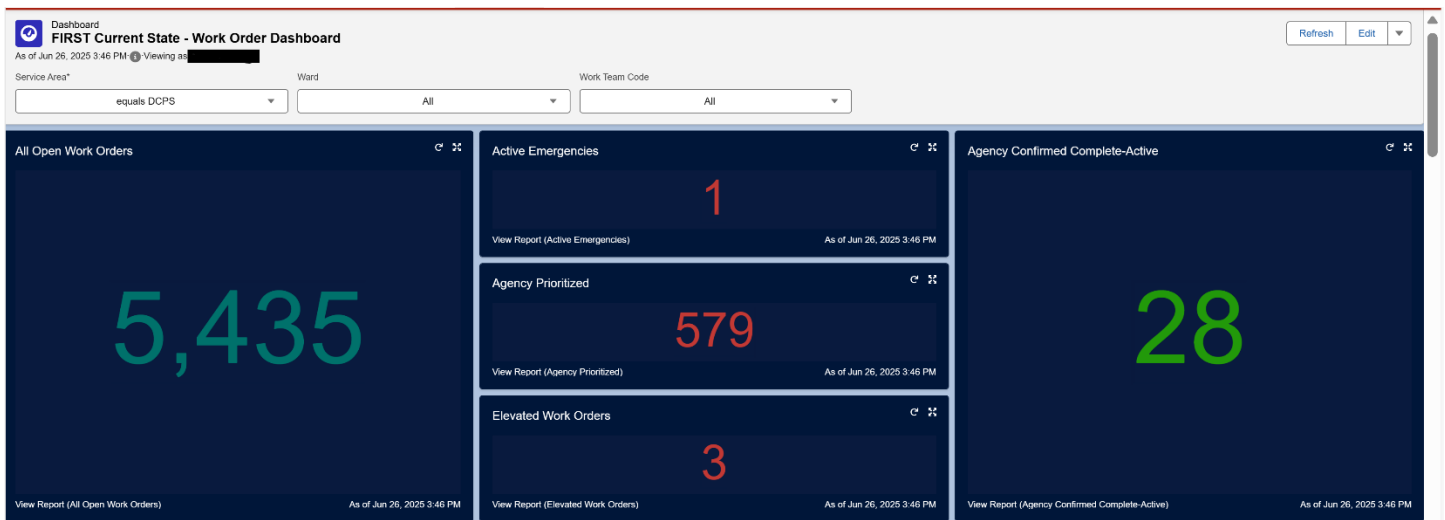
DGS Events

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### DGS Daily Operations Dashboard – DCPS Portfolio

This dashboard provides a live operational snapshot of the DCPS work order portfolio and is used during the daily Facilities Operations stand-up to drive decision-making and field coordination. It displays key performance indicators including total open work orders, active emergencies, agency-prioritized requests, elevated items, and tickets marked complete by the agency but still showing as active. These metrics are refreshed in real-time and help leadership allocate resources, escalate urgent issues, and maintain visibility on service delivery across all wards and work teams.



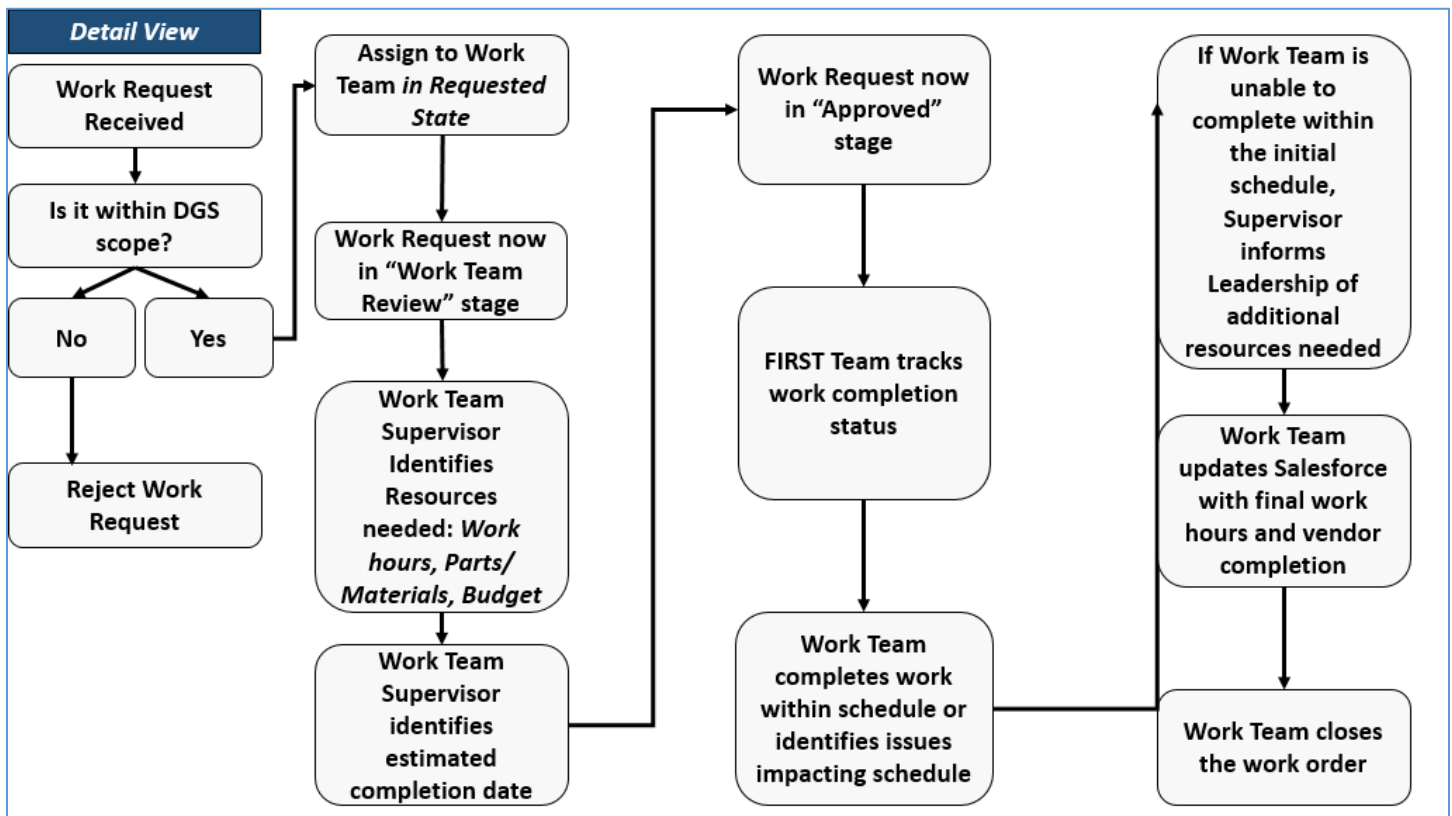


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**DGS Work Order Lifecycle – Process Flow Overview**

This flowchart illustrates the end-to-end lifecycle of a work order within DGS. From initial intake and scope validation through assignment, scheduling, execution, and closure, each step is driven by supervisor-level oversight and integrated tracking via Salesforce. Once a request is deemed within DGS scope, it enters the Work Team Review stage where supervisors determine required labor, materials, and estimated timelines. The intake team monitors status in the Approved stage, flagging delays and escalating resource needs when necessary. Upon completion, the work team logs all labor and vendor inputs before formally closing the request. This structured workflow supports transparency, accountability, and service-level performance across the DCPS facility portfolio.



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