

Herndon Middle School Video Monitoring Information

Herndon Middle School is considering installing cameras, as part of our safety and security plan. The Herndon Middle School administrative team believes that cameras will increase the ability to maintain the safety of all students, staff members and visitors within the building. Cameras will only be placed in high traffic areas and will not be placed in classrooms or restrooms. Based on an assessment from our FCPS Office of Safety and Security, Herndon Middle School should have 44 interior, and 17 exterior cameras installed to meet the needs for monitoring our school and campus. The funding for the installation of cameras at Herndon Middle School is provided in the current FCPS school board approved budget for 2019-2020. Herndon Middle School is one of seven middle schools considering installation of cameras this year.

The effectiveness of video monitoring has been shown to reduce theft and vandalism, as well as aid administrators in timely and accurate determinations in student/staff and building incidents. Seventy seven percent of all public high school currently use security cameras to monitor schools (Indicators of School Crime and Safety, U.S. Department of Justice and Education, November 2010). Locally, the school divisions that utilize video surveillance include the Maryland divisions of Frederick County, Montgomery County and Prince George's County. In Virginia, Alexandria, Loudoun, Prince William, Fauquier, Stafford, and Culpepper School divisions utilize interior cameras. Within Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) all high schools and several middle schools have video monitoring in place.

Cameras are not meant to be an invasion of privacy, but an additional layer of security in a complex world in which we live. They are considered fundamental to school security programs. Cameras will not be personally monitored, but footage would be available for review up to 30 days in case of an incident. The only people who would see the video are FCPS staff who need to review and use the images in the course of their official duties. This is typically security and administration. Parents may view images only of their own student and may not have copies of footage. Parents will be notified if video has been reviewed regarding their son/daughter.

Feedback on the proposal will be gathered from students, staff and community members through various means:

Faculty and staff will be surveyed through the Instructional Leadership Council (which is a group of teacher leaders, counselors and staff from all departments of the school) on January 14th as well as through an online staff survey on January 13th.

Students will be surveyed through the Student Council Association representatives on January 14th.

Parents and community members will be surveyed in conjunction with a parent information meeting, right before our curriculum night at 5:30 p.m. on January 16th. If you are unable to attend and would like to submit feedback, please fill out Camera Installation [Community Input Form](#). You may also email John Bordenkecher at jmbordenkech@fcps.edu with questions regarding this important safety initiative.

Camera Installation Frequently Asked Questions

Will the video cameras be monitored continuously? No, they will not be routinely monitored, but rather, will be reviewed after an incident occurs. Security personnel in the office of safety and security may access video cameras and images when necessary for their official duties. An example is a school alarm after hours.

How long will the images be retained? By regulation, they must be stored for at least 14 days and not more than 30 days.

Who can view the images? FCPS staff who need to review and use the images in the course of their official duties may do so. This is typically limited to administrators, security personnel and personnel engaged in disciplinary reviews. The School Resource Officers and the School Liaison Commander are allowed to view the images because they are considered school officials, however no other police personnel are permitted. Parents may view images of their own students. When a video involves more than one student, the parents of any student who is a primary subject of the video may review the recording but may not have a copy. Parents of students who are in the background do not have a right to view the recording. Employees may view images in which they are the subject.

Who will these videos be released to? Disclosure of student images to individuals or organizations outside FCPS may be made only with parent consent (or student consent if the student is 18 years of age or older), in response to subpoena, search warrant or court order, in connection with a health or safety emergency, in response to legal action against the system, or consistent with one of the other exceptions to the disclosure ban in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act regulations.

Are there future costs? The surveillance systems come with a 3-year parts and labor warranty and thereafter are covered under a preventive maintenance and repair contract currently funded centrally. As the number of cameras increase in FCPS, these contract costs are expected to rise. Additionally, once a school receives their initial permission to implement video cameras, the principal may consider adding additional ones in the future, if circumstances warrant an expansion.

What is the funding source? The funding for the project is included in the current FCPS 2019-2020 budget.

If you obtain video surveillance, what reporting does the school have to do? Schools that are granted permission to utilize ongoing video monitoring are required to submit data regarding the number of incidents in specific areas of the schools in which cameras have been installed and the number of successful investigations of incidents using video recordings. Successful means that the video was helpful in determining what happened in an incident. The Student Information System has an input field for camera use as it relates to discipline cases. Additionally, the superintendent is required to annually report to the School Board incident and survey data collected regarding the effectiveness of ongoing video monitoring.

Are the cameras effective? The experience of FCPS with video surveillance strongly suggests that their use resulted in significant reductions in vandalism at schools that used the systems, as well as aid administrators in timely and accurate determinations in student/staff and building incidents

Do other school systems use video surveillance? Seventy-seven percent of all public high schools use security cameras to monitor schools (Indicators of School Crime and Safety, U.S. Departments of Justice and Education, November, 2010). Locally, the school divisions that utilize video surveillance include the Maryland divisions of Frederick County, Montgomery County and Prince George's County. In Virginia, Alexandria, Loudoun, Prince William, Fauquier, Stafford, Culpepper and Alexandria school divisions utilize cameras. Washington D.C. also uses them.