

In the coming weeks and months, contractors will be finalizing the installation of access control systems and exterior security cameras throughout the Ithaca City School District.

Access control systems will replace the mechanical key-controlled locks on school doors to limit and regulate exterior entryways. The systems will allow for key card entry, tailored access privileges, scheduled door-locking mechanisms, phone integration, and lockout capabilities. When school is in session, all doors will be locked during the school day. Each building will be able to choose different scheduled lock times outside of the school day, depending on the needs of their communities.

After a brief period of testing in February and March, the access control systems will be systematically activated at all schools. New ICSD identification badges will replace standard door keys, and will be customized to each faculty or staff member's building assignments. Entry to the buildings will be limited to the doors that have card-reader access for staff, and to the main entrance for students, families, and other visitors. At each entrance, an intercom system will allow visitors to communicate with the main office and gain entry through a remote latching system. Visitors will then sign in and wear badges during their visits to the schools.

In addition, exterior video security cameras are being installed at all school buildings, and the interior video security system at Ithaca High School is being replaced and enhanced. The cameras will be network-attached, allowing for easy access for school administrators, regardless of their location. First responders will also have access to live feeds when necessary. The ICSD will not use the security cameras for surveillance purposes; camera footage will only be accessed when issues or crises arise.

The access control systems and security cameras are funded by an allocation from Governor Cuomo's Smart Schools Bond Act (SSBA), a \$2 billion initiative to finance improved technology and infrastructure. This past summer, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) approved the ICSD's \$2.6 million investment plan to install these new systems. If the projects are completed under budget, the ICSD will use the remainder of the allocation to install additional high-tech security features in the schools.