

Gilman School

Location: Baltimore, MD

Campus Type: Urban

Enrollment: 1,033

Faculty: 146

Campus Size: 68 acres

Gilman School, like many K–12 organizations, faces the same emergency notification challenge—how can the school reach all faculty, staff, and students in the event of an emergency? Gilman, however, is unique in that it was founded in 1897 as a private preparatory school for boys. With more than 1,000 students visiting the school’s 68-acre campus daily, maintaining a safe learning environment is a top priority.

More recent incidents at Sandy Hook and Florida State University have spurred an ever-growing conversation about how to manage active shooter scenarios, and many organizations like Gilman have been proactive in implementing systems that cover possible gaps in emergency notification coverage. Steve Paquette, network engineer and technology support coordinator at Gilman School explains that recent events at other schools have lead Gilman to consider a more comprehensive emergency notification system.

Like many schools, Gilman utilized a basic notification system prior to expanding its emergency alerting capabilities. “We had a public address system already in place in addition to phones,” says Paquette. In many ways, Alertus has served to integrate the two through its innovate text-to-speech interface module, which enables centralized command and control of speakers and public address systems.



The Alertus system also offers easy integration with a number of mass notification systems. “Gilman uses e2Campus for text message and email notification; that partnership with Alertus has made our process much simpler,” says Paquette. “We are currently setting up e2Campus scenarios with pre-recorded voice and text using their mobile app.” Alertus’ partnerships with organizations like e2Campus ultimately result in a more comprehensive emergency notification system. This type of integration also provides an easy, one-step process that makes emergency notification activation for organizations like Gilman both simple and timely. In many situations, such as on-campus shootings, time is of the essence. According to a recently released FBI study on active shooter incidents in the U.S., 60 percent of active shooter scenarios ended before police arrived. This means that notification coverage and timeliness are crucial when it comes to getting an emergency alert out to individuals.



The Alertus text-to-speech (TTS) module delivers highly intelligible custom alert messages over unrehearsed live voice.

Gilman is always working to optimize its emergency notification and coverage in order to enable the best security and support. “We are in the process of meeting with local authorities and sharing information to help with communication,” says Paquette. As many schools will attest, having local and state law enforcement support and involvement in emergency communication planning is not only smart planning, but generally improves response time in the event of an emergency.