

Volume 3, Issue 6

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[FB-ISAO Current Threat Level](#)

FB-ISAO Physical Threat Level:

Severe

FB-ISAO has assessed the general Physical Threat Level for US Faith-Based Organizations as “SEVERE.” As per FB-ISAO’s definitions of the Physical Threat Levels, “SEVERE” means that an event is highly likely.

Please note that the Pandemic Threat Level has been lowered to [ELEVATED](#).

FB-ISAO Cyber Threat Level:

Guarded

FB-ISAO has assessed the general Cyber Threat Level for US Faith-Based Organizations as “GUARDED.” As per FB-ISAO’s definitions of the Cyber Threat Levels, “GUARDED” means FB-ISAO is unaware of any specific events, but a general risk of incidents exists.

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FB-ISAO Newsletter

FB-ISAO Establishes a School Safety Channel

By Eli Russ, Professional Member, FB-ISAO

The Faith-Based Information Sharing and Analysis Organization (FB-ISAO) is pleased to announce a new channel on FB-ISAO Slack dedicated to safety and security information for Pre-K-12 schools, institutes of higher education, and other educational institutions and childcare programs (“schools”). FB-ISAO members now have a place to review and exchange resources, tools, emerging and best practices, sector and news updates, and communicate with individuals from houses of worship and faith-based organizations.

By sharing information on a range of topics, members can learn about the challenges and solutions to improving school safety. For example, members have shared information regarding upcoming webinars from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on [school safety](#) and the United States Secret Service (USSS) on averting [targeted school violence](#) along with other helpful resources. The [#school_safety](#) channel is accessible to FB-ISAO members via [Slack](#). We encourage participation at any level in the discussion and welcome feedback and suggestions regarding desired future products and initiatives related to school safety.

This is an opportune time to review and develop your school’s emergency plans, including a plan’s [public health annex](#), as many schools enter a summer recess. The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has challenged and will continue to challenge schools to adapt to the latest [public health guidance](#). Particularly, and as in-person instruction increasingly resumes full-time, schools are expected to support [vaccination programs](#) for students, to establish new methods to safely instruct students, and to [maintain business operations](#). The [#school_safety](#) channel will serve as an informative and timely resource for members to keep up with COVID-19 prevention guidance for schools. [Read the entire post](#).

A variety of incidents have impacted schools in the past month. This short list outlines the wide variety of incident types, adversaries, and methods that schools encountered, including shootings, protests, arson, vandalism, and cyberattacks impacting school facilities and systems, students, parents, and community members.

- In rural Idaho, a sixth-grade girl [fired](#) multiple rounds inside and outside of her middle school, wounding two students and a custodian, before being disarmed by a teacher.
- Small groups of anti-mask protestors [harassed](#) students and parents at or near several schools in the Los Angeles, California area.
- A Brooklyn, New York man was [arrested](#) following an attempt to set a yeshiva and synagogue on fire. He is also suspected of physically assaulting a Jewish man that day and vandalizing a Catholic church the previous week.
- A preschool at a synagogue in San Francisco, California was [vandalized](#) with anti-Israel messages.
- The Clover Park School District in Washington State experienced a [disruption](#) in computer systems following a ransomware attack.

FB-ISAO Advisory Board

Get to Know the Board of Advisors

Contact Us

Company Name

FB-ISAO

Email

Info@faithbased-isao.org

Website

www.faithbased-isao.org

Not Yet a Member of FB-ISAO?

[How to join...](#)

Not Yet on FB-ISAO Slack - You Need to Be!

[Write to membership](#)

Upcoming FB-ISAO Events

Monthly Threat Brief	29 June
Member On-Boarding	20 August

Cyber Road Show Coming Soon!

FB-ISAO is excited to begin the development and conduct of a series of cybersecurity-focused discussion-based exercises! These exercises are anticipated to be conducted starting in late 2021 and 2022. Exercise participants are expected to include individuals with some level of network or cybersecurity responsibility at their Faith-Based Organization (FBO), FB-ISAO, as well as other public and private sector partners and subject matter experts, as may be appropriate.

Planning is just getting started and the exercise objectives are still in development, but members can generally expect:

- A forum for FBOs to come together to increase their cyber threat awareness relating to a notable cyber threat.
- Have an opportunity to interact with SMEs and one another to discuss cybersecurity issues, concerns, best practices and other salient points.
- Receive resources to further assist with threat awareness and accessibility to best practices relating to the identified threat.

Members can still get involved with the planning of the Cyber Road Show. Please write to membership@faithbased-isao.org.

Spotlight: The Role of the Bystander

When discussing layered defenses, the discussion is primarily focused on the roles that volunteers, employees and leaders can play and their various roles and responsibilities. However, some Faith-Based Organizations (FBO), have to rely on a small staff, volunteers, or have limited funds available for expanded security along the perimeter that could identify security issues. By focusing only on those who work with or for the FBO, it ignores another potential line of defense - the weekly or regular members of the congregation. These are those individuals who may be able to identify suspicious activities or anomalous acts, and if properly aware, can alert the organization. For example, a bystander may notice suspicious activity in a parking lot that may not be covered in the security plan or may be in an area where the organization had to accept risk because of a lack of funding or support. When planning and discussing bystander training, the organization is encouraged to define **what is a reportable incident**, as well as **consider the specific ways they want bystanders to engage**. For confrontations, a bystander could intervene to defuse/de-escalate the situation and / or alert leadership.

DHS See Something, Say Something - The Bystander Effect Video. Local authorities can't be successful alone and are counting on your observations and information. The "Bystander Effect" is now widely used in education programs for anti-bullying or to teach ways to identify sexual violence. The same concepts may apply to our willingness to report suspicious activity, as it relates to possible terrorist activities. We know that many of the signs of suspicious activity are precursors to possibly violent events.

Common Training Themes and Concepts.

- **Notice the Incident.** Bystanders first must notice the incident taking place.
- **Interpret Incident as Urgent.** Bystanders also need to evaluate the situation and determine whether it is an emergency - or at least one in which someone needs assistance, or if it warrants additional scrutiny.
- **Assume Responsibility.** Another decision bystanders make is whether they should assume responsibility for giving help. One repeated finding in research studies on helping is that a bystander is less likely to help if there are other bystanders present.
- **Attempts to Help.** Whether this is to help the person leave the situation, confront a behavior, defuse a situation, or call for other support/security.