

# St. James School

## Opportunity

Located in the heart of the Stratford, Connecticut historic district, St. James School was established 65 years ago to serve the educational, spiritual and social needs of 360 students in grades pre-K through eight. A faith-filled learning community of parents, students, teachers and administrators, St. James is committed to educational excellence, offering small classes, an active extra-curricular program and after-school care.

To achieve its academic and spiritual goals, St. James seeks to provide a safe learning environment for students, especially in the wake of the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy. "After the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School, we began to investigate surveillance solutions more seriously, recognizing the need to make our building safer," said James Gieryng, Principal, St. James School.

The school's three-story, historic stone building presents physical challenges that make achieving full surveillance coverage difficult. Staff used a single camera installed at the main entrance to control access. "Our local police department conducted a review and exposed a serious gap in our system — we couldn't tell if there was anyone else positioned outside the camera's very narrow field of view," explained Gieryng.

## Solution

The school selected Verint® Video Management Software™ (VMS) to help build a surveillance system that better protects staff and students from potential harm. "With Verint's management software, we can monitor our entire facility — inside and out — to safeguard our students more effectively," Gieryng said.

To gain broad coverage, St. James School installed 14 analog cameras inside the building and six outside to monitor key areas, including all entrances, the gymnasium, cafeteria, parking lot, and playground. Gieryng, administration staff and the after-school care director use the Verint VMS solution to manage the surveillance system live from their desktops and two large monitors in the main office. The school deployed Verint Virtual Matrix™ to automatically distribute video across its network and allow users to view live and recorded video from their desktops. Up to 30 days of continuous surveillance video can be stored on a network video recorder (NVR). "The improvement in coverage and image quality since deploying Verint's solutions is significant, making a world of difference in our ability to accurately identify individuals coming and going," stated Gieryng.



### Customer

St. James School



### Industry

Education



### Solutions

Verint Video Management Software



### Region

United States



### Results

- Broader coverage of entire facility
- Faster search times for quicker investigations
- Greater protection for staff and students
- Enhanced peace of mind for parents

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*– James Gieryng, Principal, St. James School*

Simplicity was a key requirement for the school administrators who use the system. “Ease-of-use is definitely the system’s best feature,” claimed Gieryng. “Using Verint’s advanced search and playback features, such as the interactive map display, it takes just minutes to find footage — and feedback from others indicate the same level of functionality.” Users can view different scenes from multiple cameras at the same time for complete coverage from a single monitor.

The school also plans to leverage Verint Virtual Matrix to give local law enforcement access to the system for added security. “Giving police access to our system to help investigate security breaches and threats is a top priority this year,” confirmed Gieryng, who also values the system’s image clarity. “The picture quality is exceptionally clear. I appreciate this more than anything, especially when I compare it to our old camera system.”

### Results

The main goal of the new surveillance solution is to improve student and staff safety while at school. “We have several doors throughout the building that are locked at all times, but sometimes, students open them to unidentified visitors to be courteous,” explained Gieryng. “With the Verint surveillance solution, we can easily monitor all the doors, all the time for effective access control.”

The school was also concerned about unauthorized access to its fenced-in playground, particularly during after-school hours. Local residents would sometimes bring their children or pets



to the playground. “Now under strict surveillance, with clear signage everywhere, we have successfully addressed potential security concerns,” Gieryng explained.

The Verint solution also helps improve student behavior. “We have noticed a reduction in horseplay and misconduct because students know they are being monitored,” commented Gieryng. Students also know they need to be honest, because administrators can easily investigate a situation if necessary. In one case, a student accused another of throwing a combination lock at her, which is a serious offense. Upon review, Gieryng was able to confirm that the incident did not occur. “Student behavior has always been very good at St. James, but now it is at an all-time high.”

As a private school, St. James works hard to attract new students, and keep existing students engaged and satisfied with their school atmosphere. “With the Verint solution, we can offer students, staff and parents a safe and secure learning environment,” concluded Gieryng. “The Verint solution has become an important marketing tool in our efforts to draw new people to our faith-based community.”

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