

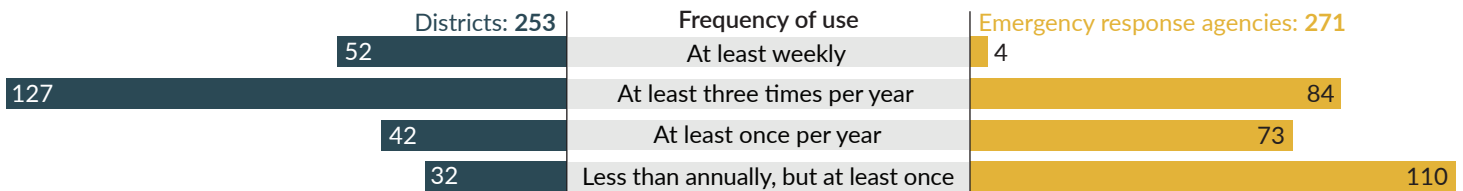
First Responder Mapping System in K-12 Schools

2020 JLARC STUDY

The 2019 Legislature directed JLARC to review how school districts and emergency response agencies use the state school mapping system.

The state school mapping system was created in 2003 to provide information to emergency response agencies during natural disasters, criminal acts, and other incidents. The state has paid \$24 million for the system since fiscal year 2004. School districts currently cover the costs if they update information. Emergency response agencies access the system at no cost.

Districts and emergency response agencies use system, but frequency varies widely and it is unclear if information in the system is current



Source: Mapping system data.

Survey found that among districts and agencies that report using the system, 33% - 53% intend to use it during an incident.

207 school districts (70%), 155 law enforcement agencies (57%) responded. Full responses available in report.

School districts and law enforcement see advantages and limitations of the state school mapping system

- 20 survey respondents report neither needing nor wanting a mapping system.
- 272 survey respondents fall in the middle. They identified advantages (e.g., availability of information, use by multiple entities) and limitations (e.g., lack of training, system issues).
- 47 survey respondents report liking and needing a mapping system.

23 survey respondents did not identify advantages or limitations.

WASPC can address many limitations by developing detailed training and outreach strategies, using data, and coordinating with school safety centers

Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) is responsible for training users, working with the system vendor, and conducting outreach.

- It has reached about 10% of potential users since 2016. WASPC cites program staffing (1.5 FTE) as a factor. It is unclear what the appropriate staffing levels should be without program plans, goals, and targets.
- WASPC does not use system data to manage and prioritize program activities.

LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR'S RECOMMENDATION

- WASPC should develop and implement detailed training and outreach strategies that have measurable goals and targets.
- WASPC should periodically review technology standards, address user feedback about technology issues, and use system data to inform its program management decisions.

As it implements the above recommendations, WASPC should look for opportunities to partner with the school safety centers created by the Legislature. Centers are managed by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Educational Service Districts.

The complete report is on the JLARC web site: www.leg.wa.gov/jlarc

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