

Designing For School Safety



Shelter. One of human kind's most basic protective needs.

Architects are one of the few licensed professions tasked with the guardianship of the public's safety and welfare in the built environment providing shelter against threats both natural and manmade.

The Marjory Stoneman Douglas school shooting continues a disturbing trend of attacks on students in their neighborhood schools; a place where protection is fundamental. While the debate will rage on how to tackle the policies, mental health issues and protocol failures that surround such attacks, architects are compelled to help contribute to a safe design solution.

The Florida Association of the American Institute of Architects (AIAFLA) has nearly 3,400 members throughout our state. Many have broad experience in school, college and university design, planning, and construction. In the nearly 20 years since Columbine, architects have developed best-practices for the design of resilient, secure facilities to not only protect our students but help them thrive. Many have participated in Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) practitioner designation training and have become members of the Florida Design Out Crime Association. This experience and knowledge is invaluable as architects seek to assist in the development of new standards to improve student safety in shelters that are both calming and aesthetically pleasing.

Recently, AIAFL leadership opened a dialogue with the Florida Department of Education (DOE) with immediate offers to provide visionary and practical input on an update to the *2003 Florida Safe School Design Guidelines*. A volunteer advisory panel of extremely qualified architects has been organized under the leadership of the Association to provide to the state, pro-bono assistance from architects with innovative safe design expertise.

As the profession tasked with implementing modernized design guidelines, we want to ensure that they are evolutionary and respond to new challenges in providing safe and protective shelter to our students. The members of AIA Florida are dedicated to a proactive dialogue with the Governor, state legislators, the DOE and school districts to find feasible solutions to design for and ensure safety within our school system.

Kim Headland, AIA
2018 President, AIA Florida

headquartered in Tallahassee, represents the interests of more than 3,600 members in Florida and the Caribbean. Members adhere to a code of ethics and professional conduct that assures the client, the public and colleagues of an AIA-member architect's dedication to the highest standards in professional practice.

CONTACT: Meagan Bonnell
AIA Florida Communications
850.222.7590
mbonnell@aiafla.org

