

Follow Security Through The Ages At NCSSM

BY KIRBY VARNADOE-RUSS

The purpose of this article was originally to give the inside scoop on all of the security breaches that have ever happened at NCSSM. Surprisingly, there have hardly been any, even at a school that is so open towards its surroundings. One would think that without a fence and with a lot of outside access, NCSSM would be unsafe.

"We don't want people to think that the campus isn't safe," said Harry Tucker, Director of Campus Resources. "This is the safest place I've ever worked." So, instead of just a list of scary break-ins, we'll explore the history of Science and Math security, where it has been, and where it is going.

Of Cameras and Access Passes

At the start of NCSSM in 1980, with only 200 students, campus security consisted of four security officers who worked shifts by themselves. Of course, at that time, there were only the dorms in the BBR buildings. Watts had yet to be renovated.

Doors were left open during the days and locked at night, residence halls were locked with key pads, and students only had keys to their own rooms. "The problem," said Tucker, "was that students could give away the keypad codes to other students, and so any [student] could get in the dorms."

With the expansion of campus buildings in 1993,

campus security was ramped up to eight security officers, with two officers working per shift.

Students had electronic identification badges, similar to our Student IDs, which allowed them to enter into buildings and onto residence halls. However, lost badges were expensive to replace because of the time it took to take a student's picture and the cost of the electronic chip, and it was unreasonable to think that students would never lose their badges.

2001 brought Tucker, and soon after followed a brand new security system. In 2005, administration issued access passes, which were both inexpensive and small so they could easily be put on key rings, given to visitors, or replaced. Tucker emphasizes the importance of calling the security measures "access passes," instead of "fobs" as they were formerly known, because of a slang meaning of "fob" and the need to be culturally sensitive.

One thing that seniors might remember from 2008 is the installment of cameras throughout campus, and how upset their seniors may have been about what they saw as an invasion of privacy.

"Cameras were mainly put in here as an investigative tool,



One blue Assistance box and several blue Assistance poles are located around campus. Access pass boxes also serve to ensure security.

•Photo by Dustin Burleson

as a security measure," Tucker said. "When we gave thought to putting cameras around, we put them on the elevators because of vandalism, and there was a lot of sexual activity going on in the elevator."

Tucker wanted to make sure that students knew the benefits of cameras on campus. "[We've also] solved several cases of theft of student laptops. We've never done one sinister thing with these cameras. We've helped people find lost things, find stolen things. We've used them for law enforcement only; we don't use them to watch students."

Despite administration's best efforts to assuage student concerns, students last year even made t-shirts that read "NCSSM is watching you" to express their concerns with administrative actions.

"The bad part [about a two-year school] is we don't get to know you because you're

only here for two years. The good part is that if we do anything controversial there won't be any grief about it two years from now," Tucker said. He wasn't completely joking.

The most recent additions to campus security have been emergency blue lights, which enable passersby-in-distress to have immediate access to cam-

pus security, defibrillators, in the event that a student or staff member experiences heart failure while somewhere on campus, and campus resource officers, Durham policemen who work around the clock.

Both the blue light and defibrillators are stationed all throughout the school and are easily accessible and user-friendly, while the police officers work in the room behind Bryan Desk.

Of Mishaps and Mayhem

Having described all of the security measures put into place to make the North Carolina School of Science and Math a safe campus, it would be inaccurate to ignore some of the security incidents that the school has had.

For example, in 2002 when NCSSM first went to electronic access with the ID cards, Rick Hess, Assistant Director

of Campus Resources, recalls a time when several students broke into his office, which was located in the ETC building, with a master key.

"[The students] went into [my] office, went onto the computer, and made themselves ID cards with universal access."

The stupid thing, Hess recalls, was that the students left their photos up on the computer screen, so when Hess got back to his office, he knew exactly who the students were. "This was the reason we spent several thousand dollars to change out the locks and to get rid of the old master keys," said Hess.

Both Tucker and Hess cringed at the thought of students having master keys, as it is still one of their main goals to get rid of all student-held master keys, whether it is through anonymous turn-ins or catching someone in the act.

Last year, several students were sent home because they were found to have broken into the registrar's office and gained access to administrative passwords. These passwords enabled students to look at other students' schedules, and access personal student information.

However, there were several different levels of participation in the hacking incident, which made it difficult to punish students fairly. "[There were] students who broke in and got the password, others who went on [Unicenter] 5-10 times, and people who only went on 1-2 times," said Tucker.

See "Security" Page 6

Workservice Inequity: To Three or Not To Three

BY SEON KANG

Work service is an integral part of the NCSSM experience that allows students to give back to their community. The overall system is positive. Jennifer Ashe, the Work Service Coordinator, describes it as "building community and a relationship." However, work service is not entirely without flaws.

The NCSSM work service guidelines require students to work three hours a week in order to graduate. However, many students do not actually work for three hours every week. In fact, students reported weekly work service amounts of time that ranged from thirty minutes to over three hours.

Ashe acknowledges this fact and says it is fine as long as the supervisor is abiding by general guidelines. The guidelines are fairly general and establish mostly basic protocol.

The inequity may have risen from multiple factors. One possibility is an excess of juniors that need to be assigned

to work service. According to Ashe, sometimes supervisors receive more juniors than they request and thus have too many students and not enough jobs.

Another factor is that supervisors are not consistent in their work service needs. Some supervisors are very busy at certain times and request the necessary number of students. However, during the rest of the time, there are more students than jobs.

"I had work service students at the Bryan Lobby desk for years, and they did homework whenever I didn't have anything for them to do," said instructor John Kirk. "The students' contributions are needed and very valuable, even if they weren't busy all the time. They were basically on call for when the phone rang, a visitor showed up, to hand out loop tickets, or if I needed them for something else." But this is not the case in all work service environments.

Biology instructor Leslie Brinson demands full participation from her work service students. Brinson has



Mara Guevarra serves food as part of her workservice. A cafeteria work service student, Guevarra works a full three hours a week.

•Photo by Dustin Burleson

requested four work service students this year, even though she occasionally needs more. Brinson almost always has jobs for her work service students,

and when she needs more work done, she borrows work service students from other supervisors in the Biology department.

Brinson explained that she would rather borrow students who may otherwise have no work to do than have too many students and not enough jobs. Brinson is extremely satisfied with the work service system. She appears to be in an ideal work

service scenario, in which time is efficiently spent and the number of students fits the amount of work.

Students had their own

suggestions on how to balance the work service system. "Equalize and have everyone work less," said junior Tucker Jones without hesitation. Jones suggested lowering the weekly requirement and distributing students so that they are all constantly engaged during work service.

Junior Keagan Sacripanti suggested finding more jobs, and possibly making hall housekeeping a work service assignment.

Concerning the number of work service hours, Ashe says that "as we grow, it's something we might have to look at." For now, the solution is in the work service guidelines, which state that students receive a different work service job every trimester.

The idea is that a student who has an intensive work service this trimester may receive a less intensive one the next trimester, though this 'solution' is all based on probability. Ashe says that due to probability, equality is established over the course of the year.