



Case Study



Spartanburg School District Five Builds a Lasting Partnership and a Layered Entry Process with Evolv Express[®] and Evolv eXpedite[™]

Customer Snapshot

LOCATION: Duncan, South Carolina

STUDENTS ENROLLED: ~10,670

SCHOOLS: 1 High School, 4 Middle Schools, 6 Elementary Schools, 3 Specialized Academies

WEBSITE: www.spart5.net

PREVIOUS SECURITY TECHNOLOGY: Traditional Walk-Through Metal Detectors

Solution Snapshot

Goals

- Strengthen the district's layered approach to safety
- Reduce delays during morning arrival at busy entrances
- Support non-security staff in confidently operating the system
- Provide clear, predictable routines students could learn quickly
- Maintain trust and transparency with families

Solution

People

- Evolv Customer Experience Team + on-site event support technicians
- School District Security Team

Process

- Deployed Gen1 across 6 Schools
- Expansion with Evolv eXpedite at key high school entrances

Technology

- 29 Evolv Express® Gen1 & Gen2 systems
- 4 Evolv eXpedite™ systems
- MyEvolv Portal and Evolv Insights® + mobile app

Solution Summary

- Evolv Express
- Evolv eXpedite
- Express Gen1 deployed in 2022
- Express Gen2 additions in 2024
- eXpedite added at the high school in mid-2025
- Morning ingress run by teachers, coaches, administrators, and contracted security

Outcomes

Survey-Based Outcomes

(based on a survey conducted by Spartanburg School District 5 of 1,000+ students, and 25+ school staff, and 13 contracted security staff)



83.5% of students said the process was easy or very easy to understand.



Around 57% of students agreed they felt safer knowing a weapons detection system was in place.



94.8% said they always or most of the time knew where to walk and place belongings.



90.5% of school staff and 92.4% of contracted security rated the system as user friendly.



92.2% of students felt neutral or positive about the system.

Operational Outcomes*



Average daily volume at Byrnes High School is ~3,100.



The average alert rate based on over 336,000+ bags screened with Evolv eXpedite at Byrnes High School between October 2025 and March 2026 was 1.5%.



Average clear rate across Express systems at Byrnes High School between 6–9 am for the 2026 school year so far is 90.7%.



*Based on Evolv Insights data collected from the systems in use. Clear rate as used here means the percentage of those entering through the Express systems that did not trigger an alert. Data pulled for peak ingress time (6am–9am). Alert rates may vary based on venue policies, sensitivity setting, clutter, and operational factors.



Spartanburg School District 5's Need for a Proactive Safety Plan

District leadership identified the need to manage increased enrollment and high-volume morning arrival without waiting for a major incident.

Spartanburg School District 5 is one of the fastest growing districts in South Carolina. It spans multiple campuses and serves more than eleven thousand students each day. As enrollment grew, so did the complexity of morning arrival. Thousands of students were arriving at the same time, funneling through a small number of high-volume doors.

Superintendent Dr. Randall Gary described what families expect each day. "Parents want their children to take in as much information as they can... but what they really want more than anything is for their child to come home safely." He noted that the district did not want to "wait until you have that major event before you move to the next level."

"Our primary objective is to have a smooth flow and a smooth process of checking bags and checking students at the same time," said Ryan Cothran, Director of Safety & Emergency Services, for Spartanburg 5. "Bringing that safe environment to the school so they can feel safe at school and the staff can feel safe at school."

The district had used traditional walk-through metal detectors at athletic events, so they already knew the limitations: slow lines, frequent alarms, and no clear indications of where an item might be located. After evaluating several vendors, Cothran said the district "still chose Evolv because of the system... it seems to be more accurate than what we observed with other systems."

In January 2022, Spartanburg piloted Evolv Express at Byrnes High School. Dr. Gary stressed the importance of explaining the pilot upfront, so families would not assume an incident occurred. "We wanted our parents to know this was something that we were planning to do. It was preventive."

The pilot was a success, and the district moved to implementation.



Evolving the Approach: Gen1, Gen2, and eXpedite

After a successful pilot, the district expanded and upgraded its deployment over several years to address differing entrance needs across campuses.

After the pilot, Spartanburg deployed Gen1 Evolv Express systems across middle and high schools. Each school tailored the setup to its space. In 2024 the district added Gen 2 to all elementary schools instead of upgrading systems. On a typical school day, Evolv systems at Byrnes High School supported an average daily volume of ~1,300 student entries. In addition, between 6 and 9 a.m., Byrnes High School has had a clear rate of 90.7% for the 2026 school year so far.

Drew, a senior at Byrnes High School noted, "...at first, it was definitely a process," he said, describing the learning curve students and staff experienced. "Once they got a few tries... it definitely [became] a smoother process."

By 2025, the high-clutter bag traffic at the largest high school entrances exceeded what Express alone could manage efficiently. The district added four Evolv eXpedite conveyors to these locations.

The change was immediately noticeable to students. Peyton, also a senior student at Byrnes High School noted, "...once eXpedite was introduced, [it was] such a faster process... we

just take our backpacks off, send it through the machine, and then head our way to class."

For Cothran, pairing Express and eXpedite added clarity and confidence. "Having Express and eXpedite together eases the minds of parents, staff... and our SROs," he said. "Alerts appear in one place, and the bag is screened separately." The average alert rate based on over 336,000+ bags screened with Evolv eXpedite at Byrnes High School between October 2025 and March 2026 was 1.5%.

"...once eXpedite was introduced, [it was] such a faster process... we just take our backpacks off, send it through the machine, and then head our way to class."

- Peyton, Senior, Byrnes High School.
Spartanburg School District 5



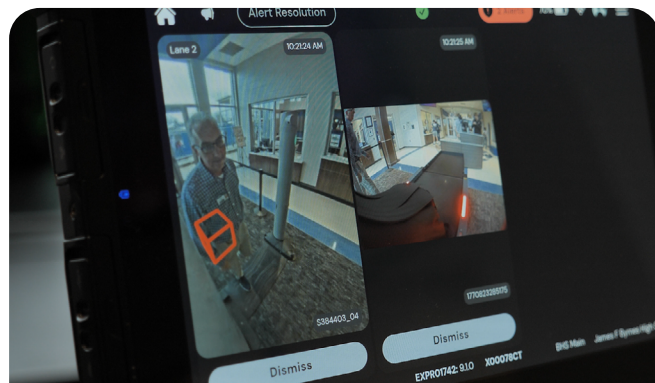
Learning the Routine

After a successful pilot, the district expanded and upgraded its deployment over several years to address differing entrance needs across campuses.

At one of the high school's busiest entry points, math teacher Lauren saw a clear rhythm take hold. Students learned the cadence: place the bag flat, step forward, and keep the line moving. "Once students understood the pace; they set it down and ran," she said. What began as a learning curve quickly became a familiar part of the school day.

Students' survey responses reflected that same experience at scale. Across more than one thousand student participants, 83.5% said the entry process was easy or very easy to understand, and 94.8% said they consistently knew where to walk and place belongings.

Staff feedback reinforced the same theme: once the process was in place, it was clear and usable. In the surveys, 95.2% of staff and 84.7% of contractors respectively said the system was easy or very easy to learn, and large majorities rated it as user friendly. Many also noted that the alert image and red box made it easier to quickly identify where to focus their attention.



The Evolv tablet helps operators quickly resolve alerts by showing **who and where to search**. A Red Box appears on the image of the person who alerted, highlighting the area of concern so staff can focus on secondary screening without intrusive, head-to-toe searches.

What the Feedback Data Shows

Survey responses from students, staff, and contracted security provided insight into how the entry process was understood and experienced at scale.

The district also conducted surveys* to gather broad feedback from students, teachers, and security personnel.

Student Perspectives:

- 83.5% said the entry process was easy or very easy to understand.
- 94.8% said they always or most of the time knew where to walk and place belongings.
- Overall sentiment skewed neutral to positive: 44.8% positive, 47.4% neutral, 7.7% negative.
- Around 57% agreed that they felt safer knowing a weapons detection system was in place.

Teachers and Coaches Perspectives:

- 95.2% said the system was easy or very easy to learn.
- 90.5% rated it user friendly.
- Many noted that the alert image and red box helped them understand where to focus when an item needed to be checked.

Contracted Security Staff Perspectives

- 84.7% said the alert image made their job easier.
- 92.4% called the system user friendly.
- 84.6% said the entry process helped direct students efficiently.



*Based on surveys conducted by the school district of 1,000+ students, 25+ school staff, and 13 contracted security staff.



Supporting the Work Behind the Scenes

District safety staff used Evolv’s portal and mobile tools to monitor activity and adjust settings across multiple schools.

Much of what made morning arrival predictable across the district happened behind the scenes. Cothran relied heavily on Evolv’s digital tools to support staff at multiple campuses without having to stand at every entrance.

He described the MyEvolv Portal and Mobile App as central to that work. “Having the portal and the mobile app has been great... being able to change sensitivity from an app or the portal sitting in my office,” he said. Instead of traveling between schools, he could review situations remotely and adjust settings when needed. “Being able to look at what’s going on and seeing the alerts live is great.”

The portal also replaced the guesswork that used to come with text messages about alerts. “Prior to that, you would just get a text saying something had been found... I can pull it up right there on the portal and see everything.”

Cothran used Insights when he needed a broader view of performance. “Some of the benefits I see... are looking at the live screening and then the alert rate reports,” he said, adding that the built-in templates covered what the district needed.

These tools helped him guide teachers, coaches, administrators, and contracted security through morning operations, making it easier to keep lines moving while supporting staff from a distance.

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– Ryan Cothran, Director of Safety,
Spartanburg School District 5

Community Trust Grew as Safety Screening Became Routine

As screening became a regular part of the school day, family concerns shifted toward broader acceptance of the process.

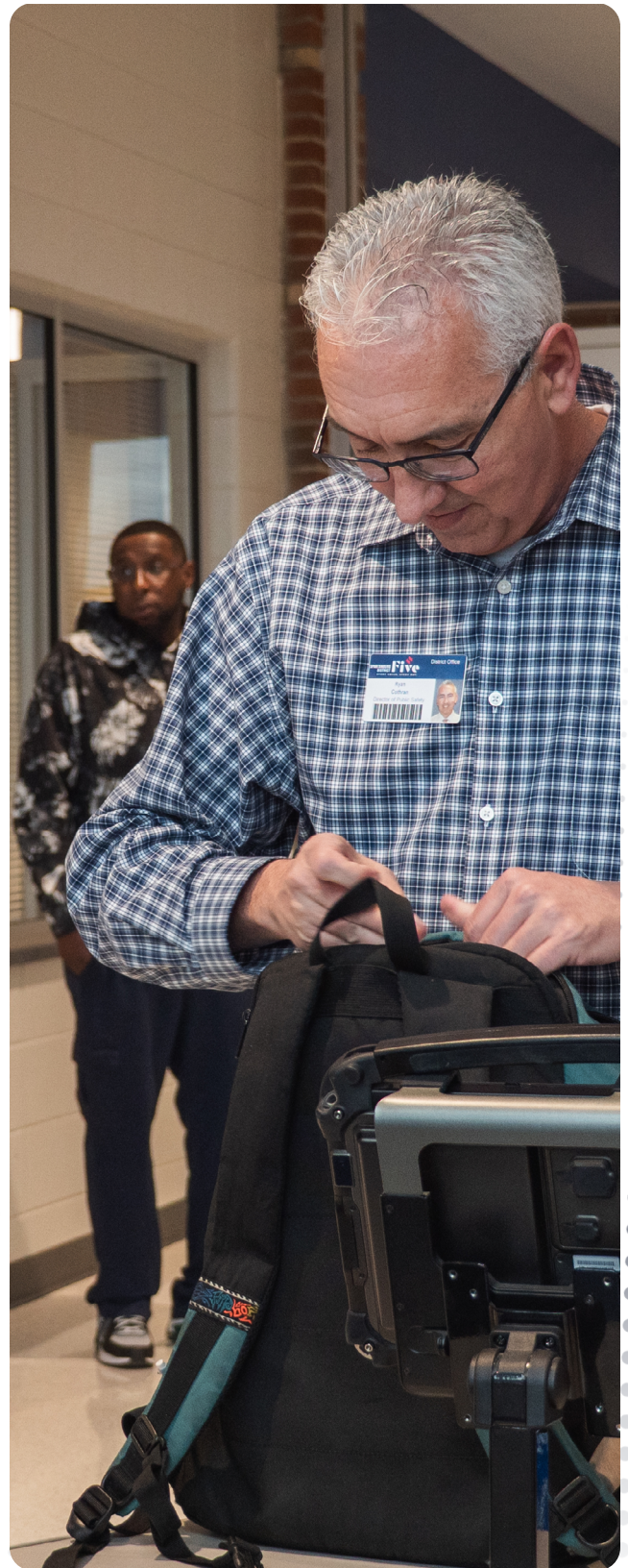
Community reactions shifted over time. At first, some families were understandably uncertain about how screening might affect the overall feel and flow of the school day.

There were questions about convenience, student experience, and whether the added process would change the school environment. However, as screening became a consistent part of the daily routine, many of those concerns began to fade.

Dr. Gary recalled a particularly meaningful email from a parent who had initially opposed the approach but later wrote, "Thank you for the inconvenience of safety, sir, I stand humble and corrected." It was a moment that stayed with him, reinforcing that families recognized the purpose behind the system and the school's commitment to creating a safer environment.

"Parents want their children to take in as much information as they can... but what they really want more than anything is for their child to come home safely."

– Dr. Randall Gary, Superintendent,
Spartanburg School District 5





A Trusted Partnership, Strengthened Over Time

Over multiple school years, the district continued refining its approach through ongoing collaboration and operational adjustments.

Spartanburg School District Five's journey unfolded over several years, one morning at a time. What began as a pilot at a single high school became a districtwide process shaped by clear communication, staff involvement, and steady refinement. Students learned the routine. Teachers found they could support it with confidence. Security staff developed a rhythm for resolving alerts without slowing the line. Families grew to understand why the district added this layer and how it fits into the larger goal of creating a safe place for learning.

For Director of Safety Ryan Cothran, the decision came down to doing the work carefully and choosing a system the district could stand behind. "If we're going to do this extra layer of screening, if we're going to do it, let's do it right," he said.

Today, the district's morning routine reflects that mindset: steady, predictable, and supported by people across roles. The technology plays its part, but ultimately it is a community adapting together and building a process that students and staff can rely on as they start their day.

Contact us to learn more.

evolv.com

info@evolvtechnology.com +1 781-374-8100