



## SCHOOL SECURITY GRANT PROGRAM RADIOS

OCTOBER 9<sup>TH</sup>, 2013

School superintendents and treasurers will be receiving an email, possibly today, from the Ohio School Facilities Commission (OSFC) regarding the School Security Grant Program.

One portion of this grant aims to equip every eligible public school building with a radio that will link the school with the first responders in their area using whatever radio system is compatible to do so.

The OSFC is offering schools the ability to apply for what has been described as a MARCS radio; in this case, the Motorola-brand radio will be purchased by the state directly and provided to the school, and no purchase or reimbursement will be required at the district level.

To clarify, MARCS is a state radio system used by state agencies and some first responders. Butler County operates their own regional radio system used by all first responders based in Butler County, including all of the cities of Middletown and Monroe (including their area in Warren County).

Radios that work on the MARCS system are also compatible with the Butler County system, known as the Butler Regional Interoperable Communications System (BRICS). If your school district is eligible for this grant, you can order the MARCS-compatible radio offered by OSFC and it will work on Butler County's BRICS radio system. When the radio is programmed and delivered, we can work with the vendor to make sure your radio is programmed to use the BRICS system and enable you to communicate with your local first responders.

While the MARCS system charges users a \$20/month fee for each radio to access the system, BRICS will not be charging a monthly system access fee for school radios used primarily to interface with public safety, as described in this grant program, because we consider it an "emergency use only" radio. If your radio uses the BRICS system, you will only be responsible for the maintenance of the radio.

The BRICS system is maintained by the Communications Division of the Butler County Sheriff's Office. This desktop radio, programmed to use the BRICS radio system, will allow you to:

- send an emergency panic alarm to your local 9-1-1 center
- receive emergency announcements from your local 9-1-1 center (e.g. weather emergency or information about an incident that may affect your school)
- communicate from one school to all schools within your district in a situation where telephones are down or when an announcement needs to reach all schools simultaneously

If you have any questions regarding the emergency communications portion of this grant, BRICS, MARCS or how this will work with your schools and first responders, contact:

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