

# Joliet Township High School Superintendent's School Safety Update

Dear Parents & Guardians,

At Joliet Township High School, safety is always our top priority. JTHS continually takes steps to provide a safe learning environment. The BluePoint Alert System has been activated District-wide. With the activation of this system, we also want to take the opportunity to provide an update on the safety measures in place to protect the students, staff, and visitors that enter our buildings. We are hopeful that we will never have to use these safety measures and systems in a real emergency; however, JTHS believes in a proactive approach to school safety.



Dr. Karla Guseman  
Superintendent/  
Assistant Superintendent



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## BluePoint Alert System

The BluePoint Alert System looks and works like the red fire alarm pulls already installed in our schools. The BluePoint Alert System adds two types of pulls that are positioned throughout our schools: **blue colored pulls** to alert police and **green colored pulls** to alert medical responders. Both pulls should only be used in events where there is a life threatening emergency. The system also includes wearable mobile alert pendants that have been distributed to the principals and administrators. These pendants allow the user to activate the alarm system from any location, including outdoor athletic facilities and school grounds.



## What does the BluePoint Alert System do when Activated?

The BluePoint Alert System provides first responders with the information they need to make faster, more informed decisions in the event of a life threatening emergency. If a school has an active shooter, intruder, or a life threatening situation, anyone can pull the alarm to immediately notify law enforcement. Once activated, first responders are notified of the specific school and the exact location within the building that the emergency is occurring. The system provides live camera feeds and computerized floor plans that first responders use to see into the building. JTHS worked with our police and fire departments over the summer to ensure they are aware of the system and its capabilities. If the system is activated, our local first responders will have quick and immediate access to video footage through an app on their cell phone. With this system in place, first responders are immediately dispatched and the response time to the emergency situation is drastically reduced.

### Notification within the School

The BluePoint Alert System also alerts students and staff that there is a threat on the premises. When the alert is activated, an audio message is broadcast through the PA system and flashing blue strobe lights are triggered. A lockdown and/or appropriate safety procedures will be followed.

### Training for Staff & Students

Staff and students will participate in drills and training. This includes notifying students that if they pull the alarm intentionally without a life-threatening emergency, they would face disciplinary action. JTHS does not expect this to be a problem; however, it is important to note.

## BluePoint Video

### Wearable Devices

Another way to quickly alert police and fire

Each school has been given wearable mobile devices. This should be worn by staff members when outside the building, such as during physical education, so they can continue to have access to the BluePoint Alert System even when not immediately near a pull station.



## School Safety Elements

At Joliet Township High School, school safety is always our top priority. Below you will find information that pertains to school safety elements in place at our schools.

### School & District Emergency & Crisis Response Plans

Our schools and district have Emergency & Crisis Response Plans that are reviewed by administration, local police, and fire officials. The plans are detailed documents that outline procedures and protocols that staff and students will follow in emergency and crisis situations, using the Incident Command System (ICS). The Incident Command System is designed to effectively integrate resources from different agencies to effectively deal with emergencies. After safety drills and emergency school incidents, police and fire officials debrief with administration and the School Resource Officer to provide areas of improvement. These debriefing sessions are an opportunity to review the Emergency & Crisis Plans to continually improve.

### School Resource Officers, Security Personnel & Cafeteria Monitors

Joliet Township High School has one School Resource Officer at three buildings in the district (Joliet Central High School, Joliet West High School and the Pathways Campus).

The School Resource Officers are members of the Joliet Police Department who are posted on site every day during school hours. In addition, Joliet Central and Joliet West employ security personnel and cafeteria monitors who continually monitor the campuses. School Resource Officers, security personnel, and cafeteria monitors build valuable relationships with students and staff that may prevent school incidents, inform investigations and/or provide important information and insight into matters pertaining to school safety.

#### Pathways Campus

Detective Shawn Stachelski  
School office phone: 815 727-6817  
Email: sstachelski@jths.org  
Joliet Police phone: 815 724-3042

#### Joliet Central High School

Detective Theron Lowrey  
School office phone: 815 727-6797  
Email: tlowrey@jths.org  
Joliet Police phone: 815 724-3042

#### Joliet West High School

Detective Demetris Anderson  
School office phone: 815 727-6910  
Email: danderson@jths.org  
Joliet Police phone: 815 724-3042

### Safety Drills

On an annual basis our schools participate in the following drills at minimum.

- Two Active Shooter/Code Blue Lockdown Drills in conjunction with the Joliet Police Department
- One Soft Lockdown Drill in conjunction with a Multi-municipality Police K-9 Task Force
- Eight Fire Drills conducted throughout the school year per Joliet ordinance
- A State-wide Severe Weather Drill in March
- One Earthquake Drill
- A Bus Evacuation Drill conducted during the first two weeks of school

## Secure Main Entrances

All schools and buildings are locked during the school day. Students and visitors must enter through the Main Entrances at each campus or building. Students and staff are instructed not to open doors for anyone entering the building through any other door. Security personnel are stationed at the Main Entrances to ensure that students enter with a valid ID. Students may undergo random metal detecting upon entry to school. In some cases, all students may go through metal detecting if it is a necessary safety precaution due to a community or school situation.

## Visitor Procedures

Joliet Township High School uses the Raptor Visitor Management System for all visitors entering Joliet Central, Joliet West, and the Pathways Campus. Visitors ring the doorbell to enter the school through the Main Entrance. The security personnel may ask for the visitor's name and reason for the visit prior to allowing entry to the building. When the visitor enters the building, they must present security personnel with a government approved identification form. The ID is scanned into the Raptor System which runs the visitor's information through the sex offender database alerting school administrators and local police if a match is found. Once cleared through the system, a visitor badge is produced that includes a photo. Visitors are required to wear a bright orange visitor lanyard and badge while in the building. After the Raptor ID badge is issued, all guests also go through metal detecting.

## Weather and School Closures

In the instance of a school closure, late start, or early dismissal, JTHS will notify parents via the School Messenger Notification System. School closure information will also be reported to the Emergency Closing Center and communicated to local media.

JTHS may choose to use an Emergency E-learning Day if school is closed. The Emergency E-learning Plan outlines specific responsibilities for teachers, staff, and students. This includes making the announcement of an E-Learning Emergency Day no later than 5 a.m. the morning of the school closure. For more information, visit <https://www.jths.org/family-resources/e-learning-emergency-day>.

## Communication During an Emergency

In regards to communication and school safety, each situation is unique. If safety has been directly jeopardized, we will communicate this to our parents and community. When a situation does not contain a threat to the school or our students, we may choose not to communicate this information because the communication can cause unnecessary panic, heightened fear, or copycat acts. Our Board of Education and school district always makes our decisions based on what is best for students and families.

JTHS utilizes the School Messenger Parent Notification System to communicate emergency information. The system delivers phone, email and text messaging. **Text messaging will reach parents the fastest, but you must opt in to receive these messages. To opt in text "Yes" to 67587.**

JTHS may also use our social media accounts, the school website ([www.jths.org](http://www.jths.org)), and local media outlets to communicate emergency information. Please rely only on official communication from district or public safety officials.

## **Student/Parent Reunification**

In some emergency situations, students may be relocated to another location for safety. In these instances, Joliet Township High School has a plan for reuniting students with their parents or guardians. Because emergency situations are unpredictable in nature, we will only be able to tell you where the Parent/Student Reunification Site is located at the time of the emergency. We will communicate the unification information using our School Messenger Parent Notification System. Please do not drive directly to the school unless the emergency communication message indicates to do so.

To ensure your student's safety, there are protocols for picking up your student. The reunification process can be time consuming. We ask that parents and guardians be patient. Please know that we will do everything we can to reunite you with your student as quickly and safely as possible. Follow the guidelines below when picking up your student from a Parent/Student Reunification Site:

- When you arrive, report to the area designated as the "Parent Report Point."
- You will be required to present valid identification. This is to protect your student from being released to unauthorized individuals. JTHS will only release students to the parents, guardians, or emergency contacts that are listed in the school's Student Information System. Please make sure your information is up-to-date. Call your school's main office to update your information.
- You will be required to sign for the release of your student. This is important because this is our way to ensure that all students are accounted for. Do not take your student from the Parent/Student Reunification Site without signing this release.

We understand that you want to be reunited with your child as quickly as possible. This system has been established to ensure your student's safety. You may jeopardize your student's safety or the safety of others if you do not follow these procedures.

## **Reporting Safety & School Violence Concerns**



### **See Something, Say Something**

Our best security is often our students, parents, staff, and community members. When we are alerted to situations that could impact school safety, we can prevent school violence. Simply put, if you see something, you need to say something. Concerns can be reported to JTHS staff or anonymously using the School Violence Tip Line at 1-800-477-0024.

Your Partner in Education,

Dr. Karla Guseman  
Superintendent/Assistant  
Superintendent