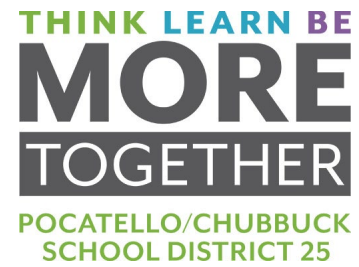


SAFEGUARDING OUR LEARNERS AND STAFF

We understand how recent events can lead to alarm and unrest amongst our school communities. We want to take this opportunity to assure parents and patrons that safeguarding the well-being of PCSD 25 learners and staff members is our highest priority. There are a few reminders about our safety protocol that bear repeating as we close out the 2021-2022 school year.



SAFE SCHOOLS ALL DAY, EVERY DAY

As part of our safety protocol, Safe Schools: All Day – Every Day, all Pocatello/Chubbuck School District 25 schools are in controlled access during school hours. This means that all exterior doors, including the front door are locked and visitors must be permitted entry using our new video access system. In addition to ongoing safety measures, the district is working to enhance its camera monitoring system districtwide

MAKING THE CALL

1. We work hand-in-hand with law enforcement to make decisions regarding any incidents that occur in our school neighborhoods, especially when it comes to elevating our schools from controlled access to lockdown. Lockdown means that no one comes in or out of the school, with the exception of law enforcement.
2. With the guidance of our law enforcement partners, we work to make decisions quickly, often in a chaotic environment with a constant stream of information, updates and authentication. It takes time to verify information, which we try to pass along to parents as quickly as possible.
3. In the event of breaking news, whether it is local, regional, or national, the district responds immediately to communicate with administrators to remain vigilant with heightened awareness.
4. In some, but not all cases, we determine if the situation warrants parent notifications via our Infinite Campus emergency messaging system. Once we send out IC notifications, it is important to take into consideration that these communications go through an automated process. Up to 14,000 calls may be made in a district-wide emergency or notification. While we do our best to send out information immediately, there can be delays in the system.
5. It is also important to note that if your phone goes unanswered, the automated dialer will make multiple attempts to reach you. Therefore, it is possible you could have multiple calls from the same or a similar phone number.
6. Rather than cause undue concern or widespread panic, we generally notify only the school involved, or in direct proximity of the incident.

POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PROTOCOLS

We want to assure parents and patrons the district has a number of measures in place to ensure the safety and security of our learners and staff. We have emergency plans to deal with any number of situations. We have a safety committee that meets monthly and district officials regularly consult with local police and emergency services personnel to ensure our emergency plans and procedures are up-to-date.

Schools are required to conduct emergency drills several times a year to ensure learners and staff are prepared in case of an emergency. Sometimes those drills are held in conjunction with local emergency services personnel. Don't be alarmed if you see a police car or fire truck at a school.

The drills include:

- **Evacuations:** Learners and staff practice how to quickly and safely evacuate a building when it is determined that a location outside the school is safer than inside the school such as a fire or facility emergency.
- **Hall Check:** Learners and staff **shelter-in-place** and practice how to safely remain indoors for a period of time in situations when there is a threat near a school such as a chemical or radiological incident.
- **Lockdown:** Learners and staff practice how to secure buildings and classrooms in situations when there is an immediate threat of violence in or around the school such as a weapon on campus.
- **Reverse Evacuation:** Learners and staff practice how to quickly return inside the school in situations when there is a disturbance in the area.
- **Learner-Parent Reunification:** Learners and staff practice how families would be safely reunited if they are evacuated from school grounds and moved to an alternate site.

WHAT SHOULD PARENTS DO DURING A SCHOOL EMERGENCY?

In an emergency situation, our administrators' first priority is to ensure the safety and security of our learners and staff. They follow the policies and procedures the district has put in place to address emergencies. In these situations, we understand it is natural for parents to want to call or visit the school, but those calls and visits can actually hinder school staff and emergency personnel as they try to deal with emergency situations. Instead, here are some tips to help parents during an emergency:

- **Be wary of initial reports.** Information moves quickly today and often initial reports are inaccurate or just plain wrong. Watch for updates from official sources.
- **Watch for updates from official district sources.** The district will share information as quickly as possible using a variety of tools, including texts, emails, the district's website, the district's automated calling system, social media outlets and local media such as newspaper, TV and radio.
- **Be patient.** The first few minutes of an emergency situation can be chaotic. It can take a little time to collect reliable information. As soon as that information is available, the district will share it with parents.
- **Keep communications with your child short.** It is natural for parents to want to get in touch with their child(ren) during an emergency. However, trying to call a child's cell phone may prevent them from hearing important, life-saving information. Texting may be a better option, but keep the exchanges short. Before an emergency, talk to your child(ren) about what kind of information is helpful to share in these situations. For example, "I am safe" or "We're being evacuated."

We appreciate that so many local families entrust their loved ones to our care throughout the school year and we are grateful for your willingness to work TOGETHER to understand and follow these practices. We all share a common priority to keep our learners and staff as safe as possible all day, every day.

We will follow up with another reminder for the 2022-2023 school year to include any updates or changes to our safety protocols.