

AFSA K-12 Drills and Safety Procedures

Student safety is our priority. This letter summarizes AFSA policies in regards to student safety while at school and on the bus. If you would like additional information about any area addressed in this letter, please contact the administrator at your child's school. Areas addressed in this letter include:

School Drills

School Bus Safety

Facility Safety

COVID Protocols

Severe Weather

School Counseling Services

Visitors

How Parents/Guardians Can Help

School Drills

AFSA K-12 conducts five fire drills, five lock down drills and one tornado drill during the school year. Before we conduct the drills, staff take time to go over situations with students, answer questions, and make sure that students feel informed and prepared in the event of an emergency. Detailed procedures for these drills, per building, are located in the student and family handbooks.

Emergency Policies

AFSA's crisis management policy addresses a range of potential crisis situations in the school district and includes general crisis procedures for securing buildings, classrooms or campus evacuation, and communication procedures. Announced and unannounced emergency drills will occur throughout the school year. It is important for students to take the emergency drills seriously.

In the event of a fire drill, students and staff will exit the building and go to the pre-designated meeting spot and wait until all clear. In the event of a real fire, students will be transported to the other AFSA school building and parents will be contacted.

In the event of a lockdown drill, students will be asked to remain in their classrooms until the all clear is sounded. In a real intruder emergency, the school's emergency policy will be followed and appropriate emergency services will be called.

In the event of a tornado or severe weather during the school day, students will follow the warning according to the plan that has been developed. Students will be led to the designated safe places, in a calm and orderly manner. Everyone will then crouch low with their head down, protecting the back of the head with their arms until the threat of a tornado has passed.

School Bus Safety

All students grades K-10 are required to participate in a bus safety presentation within the first two weeks of school. School buses are brought in and safety precautions are physically reviewed and explained. Bus drivers take time to explain the bus rules and policies to all students and answer any questions they may have. Teachers also review the expectations in their classrooms during the first week of school. Additionally, drivers take time to explain how to get out of every emergency exit on the bus and evacuation is practiced by all students.

Only students who ride on the bus may board the bus at the school or at the home stop. Parents or others are also not allowed to board the bus without prior permission from school administration.

Severe Weather

Announcements regarding school closings or late starts due to inclement weather or hazardous conditions will be delivered via a Blackboard messaging phone message, accompanied by an e-mail and text message. Information will also be posted at www.afsak12.com. Families may also access local television outlets, however no guarantee is made that the media will share our information in a timely manner. Families are encouraged to keep their contact information up-to-date with the school office to ensure receipt of voicemail, text, and e-mail messages.

School Counseling Services

In addition to class scheduling, academic advising, and post-secondary planning, AFSA school counselors work together with the Directors of Student Success to facilitate student conflict resolutions, behavior interventions, and restorative practices. The school counselors work to support the whole student in their academic and social development. Counselors may also assist students and families with finding community resources and mental health support services. In the event of a deeply-impactful school crisis, additional counseling support is available within the district as well as through mental health partnerships and collaborative crisis support teams through the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools.

Visitors

All visitors to AFSA K-12 facilities are required to sign in at the office upon arrival. Both AFSA High School and AFSA K-8 buildings have cameras at the entrances where visitors must buzz in for entry. Office staff screen visitors for names and purpose of visit at the door. AFSA asks those allowed entry not to hold the door for another, as each visitor must follow the screening process for overall school safety. If a person comes to the door who is not allowed entry, administrators have the right to refuse entry and contact law enforcement to assist with the situation as needed. Any volunteer working with students in the schools is subject to background check and/or administrative approval.

Parents/Guardians

Our students have had to overcome many challenges over the past few years. They have needed to adapt, be flexible, and take on more than we ever expected. We also know that students are resilient and learn best when they have positive, strong relationships in their lives. It is AFSA's strong belief that

forming healthy relationships with our students is of utmost importance, but we also want to acknowledge the important role that parents/guardians play in their students' education, as well. Families are AFSA's most important partners. Having the support of parents/guardians allows students to feel comfortable to take risks to further their knowledge and go beyond what school staff alone could push them to accomplish. Therefore, we ask for your partnership throughout the upcoming school year to best support your child's academic, social/emotional, and overall growth because outcomes for our students are better when we all work together.

Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns!

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