




 **DUBLIN** CITY SCHOOLS

# **SAFETY & WELLNESS PLAYBOOK**

# Safety and Wellness Threat Continuum

**Major  
Crisis**



**Mild  
Disruption**

Mass Casualty Incident

Death of Student/Staff

Self-Harm

Natural Disaster

Weapon-Involved Incident

Serious Accident

Threats & Swatting

Familial Trauma

Substance Use & Addiction

Fights

Dating Violence

Cyber Extortion

Bullying & Harassment

Dangerous Horseplay

Medical Emergencies

Minor Injuries

*Adapted from National School Safety and Security Services Threat Continuum. This list is not exhaustive, and placement on the continuum is subject to change based on the specific circumstances of an incident.*

# SAFETY

## What is school safety?



Often times, people think only of school safety as a lack of physical harm in a school environment. But in our district, school safety is comprehensive. School safety in Dublin includes **physical safety**, **psychological safety**, and **social safety**. We prioritize keeping our students safe from anything that threatens their physical, mental, and emotional wellness.



The Safety and Wellness Threat Continuum demonstrates the array of hazards for which we plan, train, and mitigate. Threats to student safety range from a minor injury caused by a fall on the playground to trauma or a severe danger that has a lasting impact on wellness. Our district and community partners are committed to preparedness for any event.



***Ensuring that our children are safe in school at all times is the most important responsibility of our district.***



# SAFETY AT DCS

## ***PLAN. TRAIN. MITIGATE.***

Our district has a safety and security coordinator, multiple elementary safety coordinators, overnight security, and a director of student wellness. Additionally, each of our high schools and middle schools have a full-time law enforcement officer assigned as a School Resource Officer (SRO). Each middle school SRO visits their feeder elementary school regularly.

As a collective team, we prepare for threats to safety and security through comprehensive planning, high-quality training, and proven mitigation strategies.

# How do we prepare?

## PLAN

Our district develops and adopts a comprehensive Emergency Management Plan annually. In accordance with state law, our emergency plan includes the following for each our school facilities:

- **Emergency Operations Plan (EOP):** A comprehensive plan that takes into account all threats and hazards for a school. The plan stipulates how we will respond to all threat types at that building, from a power outage to bullying to an active shooter incident.
- **Floor Plan:** A plan that identifies key infrastructure elements of the building, such as classroom locations, emergency exit routes, and locations of fire extinguishers.
- **Site Plan:** An aerial view of the school facility and its surrounding area, which identifies nearby roadways, fire truck routes, and other school property such as athletic fields and gymnasiums.
- **Emergency Contact Information Sheet:** A document that records vital emergency details for quick access by first responders, such as key contact information for district personnel, law enforcement, fire/EMS, emergency management, and mental health providers.

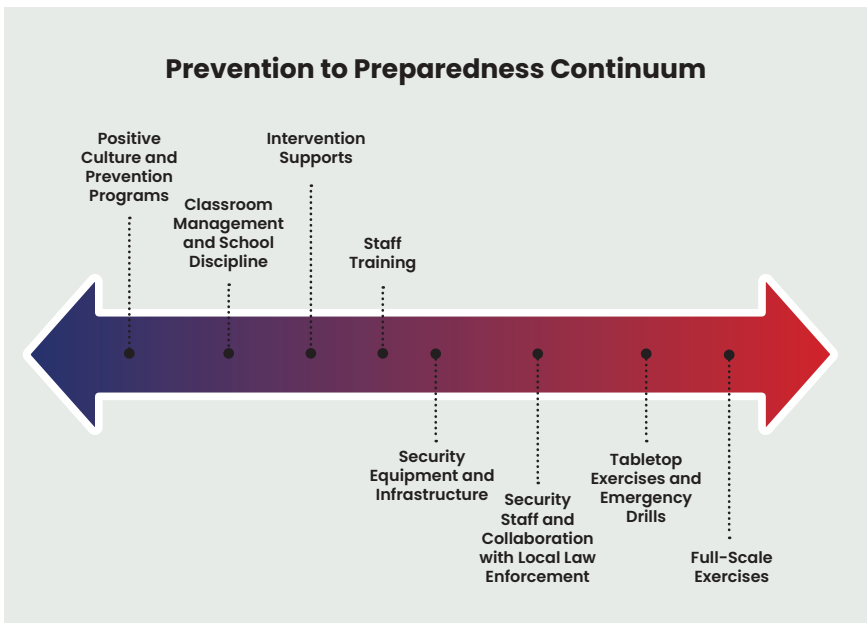
### ***THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM***

In compliance with Ohio House Bill 123, Dublin City Schools has a multidisciplinary Threat Assessment Team that includes administrators, mental health professionals, School Resource Officers, safety coordinators, and local law enforcement. The team receives evidence-based training to identify potential threats, assess their seriousness, and develop intervention plans that protect potential victims and address the root causes of the behavior. They also monitor the effectiveness of these plans to ensure ongoing safety.

# TRAIN

Each of our buildings conducts three functional safety drills a year that must be coordinated with law enforcement, in addition to multiple fire and tornado drills. Additional ongoing safety initiatives are arranged throughout the school year, including CPR, AED, and First Aid courses, active shooter response exercises, and emergency trauma response.

We also have a highly-qualified mental health team that educates our staff about crisis response protocols as well as suicide prevention and postvention. Additionally, thanks to our many partnerships, staff are trained in trauma, suicide prevention, stress and anxiety management, emotional regulation, mindfulness and breathing exercises, eating disorders, crisis intervention, and more.



*Adapted from National School Safety and Security Services Threat Continuum.*

# MITIGATE

During the school year, on-site school safety coordinators and School Resource Officers work directly with staff to conduct security self-assessments. They walk the interior and exterior of each facility to check the various measures our district employs to foster the safest learning environment possible. Below are just a few examples of our buildings' physical and operational safety features:

- **Doors:** Exterior doors are all labeled and remain locked during school hours. Entry doors have electronic access controls that not only allow staff to monitor a door's status, but they also send a notification to security and building administration if the door is left open without warning.
- **Windows:** Exterior windows are all labeled. First-floor common area windows are covered in a safety and security film for additional protection.
- **Building Access:** Access to our facilities is monitored and controlled by a badge management system. Each building has a security vestibule with two-way communication at the entrance. After being invited in, visitors must report to the main office upon arrival and sign a log.
- **Security Cameras:** Our robust security system includes cameras in the entryways, common areas, and hallways of each building. The cameras are also accessible to the Dublin Police Department during an emergency.

Finally, the recognition and reporting of suspicious behavior is the best way to mitigate any type of threatening activity. **"See something, say something,"** is a common phrase in our buildings. We encourage students and families to report any concerning behaviors or threats immediately. Our **"Stay Safe. Speak Up!"** tip line is accessible to students and staff at all times on the home page of our website. We all play a role in keeping our community safe.



# SAFETY TERMS

## ***WORDS MATTER***

In schools across the nation, the word “lockdown” means something to the students and staff in a building. But the actions affiliated with a word like “lockdown” can be very different from district to district. Each city and district use different words to describe and discuss safety and security. The following are our district’s most commonly-used terms when communicating about student and school safety.

# Standard Response Protocol

## COMMONLY USED TERMS

Our district has adopted The “I Love U Guys” Foundation’s Standard Response Protocol (SRP). Students and staff train and exercise using SRP common action language.



**HOLD** - *“In Your Room or Area”*

Used when hallways need to be kept clear of occupants.



**SECURE** - *“Get Inside. Lock Outside Doors”*

Used to safeguard people within the building.



**LOCKDOWN** - *“Locks, Lights, Out of Sight”*

Used to secure individual rooms and keep occupants quiet and in place.



**EVACUATE** - Used to move people from one location to a different location in or out of the building.



**SHELTER** - *“Named Hazard”*

Used for group and self-protection during inclement weather or hazmat incident.

In partnership with the schools, the Dublin Police Department will use the commonly used terms noted above to keep messaging consistent for students, parents and the larger community. As these terms will be shared publicly, the police department will define what the status means as it pertains to the incident.



Scan the QR code to view the SRP K-12 Parent Handout.

## OTHER COMMONLY USED TERMS

- **Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS):** An assessment tool that asks a series of simple questions to measure the severity and immediacy of suicide risk in an individual. To learn more, visit <https://cssrs.columbia.edu/>
- **Crisis:** A period of time of difficulty, trouble or danger and can range widely in scope and severity. Our response to a crisis should equal the severity of the crisis and the level of impact.
- **Postvention:** The steps that are taken after a crisis. It's important to care for those involved in the crisis and those impacted by it. Postvention activities can include providing counseling, safe rooms to process the events, follow up care and accurate communication with the community.
- **Prevention:** The effort we take to help build what are known as protective factors. Protective factors counterbalance risk factors with regard to mental health, substance abuse and risk of suicide. Prevention efforts are utilized at all levels but are most commonly conducted at the elementary and middle school levels. Prevention efforts include teaching students how to respond to risky situations, how to work out problems with others, and how to respond to peer pressure, just to name a few.
- **Protective Factors:** Influences that help support the health and wellness of individuals. Protective factors include safe and adequate housing, food security, positive relationships and support networks, resources and strategies for maintaining physical and mental health, and access to activities that promote health and wellness.

- **Reunification:** An organized process to reunite students and parents after a disruption to the school day. Positive identification and documentation are critical to ensuring students are returned to the care of the correct individuals.
- **Risk Factors:** Influences that make it more likely that individuals will develop a mental health problem. They include biological, psychological, or social factors in the individual, family, or community. The more risk factors a person has, the more he/she is at risk for suicide and other self-destructive behaviors, such as substance abuse.
- **SRO:** The School Resource Officer (SRO) program places law enforcement officers in schools with the goal of creating and maintaining a safe, secure, and supportive learning environment for students and staff. School Resource Officers support the program's proactive strategy designed to bring prevention and intervention into the schools.
- **Threat Assessment Team:** Group of officials that convenes to identify, evaluate, and address threats or potential threats to school security. Threat assessment teams are multidisciplinary and include school principals, counselors, resource officers, and mental health professionals, as well as outside medical professionals and local law enforcement.
- **Tabletop Exercise:** An exercise where participants review and discuss the actions they would take in a simulated emergency situation. Tabletop exercises are used to clarify roles and responsibilities and to identify additional campus mitigation and preparedness needs in an informal, low-stress environment. The exercise should result in action plans for continued improvement of the emergency plan.



# EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

## ***WAYS TO FIND UPDATES***

Follow **Dublin Police** on X (formerly Twitter): @DublinPolice

You do not need an X account to view updates. This will be the City of Dublin's main channel for critical information sharing during an emergency.

**Visit these websites** for major updates:

- [DublinOhioUSA.gov](http://DublinOhioUSA.gov)
- [DublinSchools.net](http://DublinSchools.net)

**Follow Dublin City Schools** on Facebook, Instagram or Nextdoor.

**Follow the City of Dublin** on Nextdoor for locally specific information.

# How do we communicate about safety?

In the event of an emergency, it is important that families and the community recognize our priority is to contact first responders and secure our schools. We make every attempt to communicate with families as quickly as possible.

Our district utilizes a broadcast messaging and notification system to communicate with families. There are three channels within the system: phone call, email, and text message. Crisis communications are usually tiered; the first communication briefly summarizes the situation and follow up communications provide more details. Communications are usually only sent to the school(s) affected. Additionally, communications do not share discipline details of the individuals involved, as we are still obligated to protect the rights and privacy of our students and staff.

Generally, we do not send broadcast messages for student medical emergencies, fire/tornado drills, or other situations where there is no threat to student or staff safety. First responder presence at a building does not necessarily indicate an emergency. Our first responders visit our schools regularly for drills, training, classroom visits, and more.

**For large-scale incidents or dynamic situations,** our district will defer to the Dublin Police Department (or other corresponding police jurisdiction) for public communication. Dublin police officers assume the responsibility for such an event, not Dublin City Schools. Parents and families should follow the police department's social media channels, and our district will share the agency's messaging as it becomes available.



# TIPS FOR FAMILIES

## ***IF THERE IS AN EMERGENCY AT YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL...***

- ✓ **Watch** for updates from the City of Dublin, Dublin Police, and Dublin City Schools. Check email, text messages, and social media.
- ✓ **Plan** to pick your child up at a reunification spot if necessary.
- ✓ **Bring** your identification for pickup.
- ✓ **Pause** before calling or texting your student. Their primary focus should be on following the directions of staff and first responders.
- ✗ Do not go to the school until prompted. Crowds interfere with emergency response.
- ✗ **Do not call** 911 for updates. Doing so can congest the phone lines and prevent other emergencies or helpful information from getting through to dispatchers.
- ✗ **Do not share** unconfirmed information on social media or with news media.

# Things you can do right now

- **Create a backpack** emergency card that includes emergency contacts and any special medical needs for your student.
- **Teach students** to memorize phone numbers and addresses in case they do not have access to a mobile device or internet.
- **Choose a family password** or code word and teach students to only go with adults who know this special word or phrase.
- **Develop** a family emergency plan and reunification location. Talk with older students in advance about what they would do if they were separated from you at any time (from crowded public events to a large-scale disaster). Identify a family meeting place other than your home, such as a neighbor's or family member's home or a local landmark.
- **Keep copies** of identification in multiple places.
- For students **with serious medical needs**, consider providing extra "back-up" medications to the school in case there is an emergency where your student needs to remain in the building for a longer period of time.
- **Ensure** that the emergency contact information for your student is updated each school year.
- **Arrange for backup** or alternative child care in case the typical school day schedule is disrupted and you are unable to get to the school.



# Talking to Children about Safety

## ***SROs ARE A GREAT RESOURCE***

Encourage your student to talk to their School Resource Officer. SROs are invaluable resources who are familiar with your child's school, the procedures in place, and what to expect during critical incidents. They are trained professionals who can answer your student's questions from a welcoming and open perspective.

# How to talk to children about school safety

For some children, talking about threats and participating in drills may cause some emotional distress. As a parent, you can help your child learn about school safety by talking to them in an age-appropriate manner.

**Young children** need brief simple information balanced with reassurance. This includes informing children that their school and home are generally safe and that adults help to protect them. Young children also respond well to simple examples of school safety, like reminding them the exterior doors are locked, just as you lock your doors at home at night. Most importantly, young children often gauge how threatening or serious an event is by adult reactions, so if a parent is feeling vulnerable or anxious, a child may too.

**Middle school children** may be more vocal in asking questions about whether they are truly safe and what is being done at their school. They may need assistance separating reality from fantasy. Parents can share the information they have about the school's safety plan and any other relevant communication to ease their child's mind.

**High school students** may have strong and varying opinions about causes of violence in school and society. Parents should stress the role that students have in maintaining safe schools by following the school's safety guidelines (not providing building access to strangers, reporting strangers on campus, reporting threats to school safety made by students or community members, for example). Also, older children should be reminded that safety is NEVER a joke.

No matter how old your children are, help them to cope with distressing feelings, rather than pretend they don't or shouldn't exist.



# Student Wellness

## ***SAFETY BEGINS WITH WELLNESS***

Ensuring safety, providing opportunities, offering choice, and maximizing learning for every student are the highest priorities for all of us in Dublin City Schools. In order to achieve these goals, students must feel physically and emotionally safe and feel a sense of belonging to their school. When students experience these, the stage can be set for them to reach their full potential.

# What to know about keeping students healthy and well

Student wellness begins at an early age in the home. The foundation of wellness includes healthy relationships, positive connections with adults and peers, healthy minds and bodies, and protective factors in the environment. When children and adults have positive, healthy, trustworthy relationships in their lives, wellness levels and coping skills improve. When children and adults have protective layers in their lives such as athletics, the arts, service projects, leadership opportunities, and/or special interests and hobbies, these can serve as anchors, and provide healthy outlets.


**Positive Relationships and Social Networks:** Offer your child opportunities to participate in activities that promote positive social interactions such as sports, the arts and clubs. Positive role models during formative years are critical to healthy development. The more connections a child has with positive adult role models, the greater chance they will have of developing those qualities within themselves.

**Sleep:** The following are recommendations from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and the CDC:

6-12 years old: 9-12 hours per 24 hour period

13-18 years old: 8-10 hours per 24 hour period

**Exercise:** The CDC recommends at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day. The more exercise the better- consider limiting screen time to less than 2 hours per day for school age children.



**Nutrition:** Provide vegetables, fruits and whole grains. Choose lean meats and other healthy proteins and reduce sugar and saturated fat intake.

**Stress Management:** Practice stress reduction activities like walking, meditation, yoga, mindfulness and breathing exercises. Make them a part of your daily routine!

**Mental Health:** Be aware of sudden changes in your child's behavior, mood and performance. Seek help and advice from mental health professionals if you notice warning signs.

Many things take place in school that contribute to students' sense of wellness. School leaders and school teams work together to provide healthy activities and outlets for students. Educators learn warning signs to look for in students so that parents can be notified and assistance can be provided. Health teachers across the district provide instruction on healthy choices and ways to stay well. School counselors and social workers provide preventative support at all levels while district employed Mental Health Specialists work with students who require higher levels of support.



# Additional Resources

## SAFE SPACE DUBLIN

Safe Space Dublin is a safety initiative led by the Dublin Police Department designed to promote havens of safety, security, and support resources that anyone can use. All City buildings and Washington Township Fire Department stations operate as Safe Space locations, including participating businesses and organizations. That means someone entering those buildings in a time of need can receive compassionate instructions from trained staff members, known as allies, about what steps they can take to receive support during a situation where their safety is in jeopardy. A hallmark of the Safe Space Dublin program is its library of immediate (24/7) and next-day resources. From mental wellness resources to food assistance information, visit **SafeSpaceDublin.org** for a complete list of local, regional, and national support services.





# **DUBLIN** CITY SCHOOLS



*Ensuring that our children are safe requires the attention, cooperation, and communication of many partners.*

*This playbook was created in collaboration with the City of Dublin and Dublin Police Department.*

**Dublin Police Department employees are committed to protecting life, liberty and property. They will provide the highest level of service and work in partnership with the community to ensure public safety.**

**STAY SAFE. SPEAK UP!**

*REPORTING HOTLINE*



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the most important responsibility of our district.*