

ALICE PROTECTIVE STRATEGIES

Ensuring a Safe Learning Environment for Your Child

Dear Parents and Guardians,

At our District, your child's safety is our top priority. We're dedicated to taking proactive steps to make sure your students school is a secure place for students and staff to learn, work, and thrive. To meet today's safety challenges and address potential threats within our school, we've introducing the ALICE proactive strategies.

We've learned that relying only on lockdown procedures is not enough, according to experts from the Department of Education, independent researchers, and law enforcement. The world is changing, and our approach to safety must change too. ALICE offers a range of strategies that give your child and our staff better options for staying safe. ALICE is an acronym for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate. We've taken the time to understand each of these options thoroughly and are confident in their effectiveness.

We implement these strategies in ways that are suitable for your child's age and abilities. Our staff is fully trained in ALICE strategies through hands-on training with our own ALICE Certified Student Resource Officers. We've chosen the ALICE Training because of their comprehensive training procedures, which we believe are the right choice for your child, our staff, our school, and our community.

These drills are conducted three times a year and are unannounced, but it's encouraged for parents to engage in discussions with their children about these procedures.

Setting the Tone

Prepare Your Children: You know your child best, and your guidance plays a vital role in their preparedness. Inform them that school is a safe place, and part of the responsibility of teachers and school staff is to practice safety skills. "Just as you practice fire drills at school, you also practice lockdown drills to ensure you know what to do in case of an emergency."

Relate to Existing Safety Practices: Explain that a lockdown drill is similar to other safety habits your family practices daily, such as wearing seatbelts and helmets. While it may be new to your child, the lockdown drill is best learned through practice.

Follow Your Child's Lead: If your child appears worried or uncomfortable, help them identify their feelings and discuss strategies for managing them. For example, taking deep breaths, reminding themselves that the drills only last for a very short time, seeking help from the teacher, or staying close to a friend.

Inform About Drill Frequency: Let your child know that schools conduct lockdown drills throughout the year, and they are announced as practice drills.

Consider Unique Needs: If you have concerns about how your child will handle the lockdown drill, reach out to the school and collaborate with your child's teacher to address your concerns.

Ask If They Want to Talk: Inquire if they would like to discuss their feelings and let their responses guide the conversation. Children process events in various ways; some may prefer not to talk about it, and that's perfectly fine. Others may want to spend time together engaging in a shared activity with minimal

conversation. Young children often process through play.

Address Feelings: If your child expresses feelings of fear, sadness, or nervousness, acknowledge their emotions while guiding them towards positive coping mechanisms. "Yes, sometimes we all experience scary feelings. What helps you feel safer when you're scared?" Share strategies that might reassure them, such as knowing their teacher is there, or that they responded appropriately to stay safe. You can also relate a personal experience of feeling scared and how you managed it.

Maintain Routines: Consistency in following your typical home routines can help everyone feel calm and safe. Most children will naturally feel better with time and the return to familiar routines.

If you have any concerns and wish to follow up with the school, please do not hesitate to reach out. Your child's teacher, school administrators, or the school-based counselor, psychologist, or social worker are all available to support your child.

Your child's safety is at the heart of everything we do. We're committed to creating a nurturing and secure environment where your child can thrive.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Maria Davillo".

Transportation & Safety Director

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