



## A PARENT'S GUIDE TO

# CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

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# OUR ROLE

The primary goal of the Douglas County School District during an emergency is the safety and security of our staff and students.

During an emergency, having a unified plan and shared vocabulary for students, staff, and first responders is paramount. That is why we use the Standard Response Protocol (SRP).

## STANDARD RESPONSE PROTOCOL



### **Hold - In Your Room or Area, Clear the Halls**

Hold status is initiated when there is a situation requiring students to remain in their classrooms. There may be a need for students who are not in a classroom to proceed to an area where they can be supervised and remain safe. Learning continues until the all clear is given. *Example: Medical issue needing outside assistance*



### **Secure - Get Inside, Lock Outside Doors**

If there is a threat or hazard outside the school building, everyone is brought inside the building and the doors are locked. Secure status could be the response to an incident in the community near the school. Secure status results in an increased situational awareness, while learning and activities continue indoors. *Example: Wildlife in the area*



### **Lockdown - Locks, Lights, Out of Sight**

This is the protocol used when a threat or a hazard is inside the school building. Teachers will lock classroom doors and turn off all lights. In addition, teachers and students will move away from the corridor line of sight and maintain silence. Occupants of rooms will not unlock their rooms for anything or anyone. When the incident is over, a responsible person capable of unlocking the room (law enforcement, school administrator, etc.) will unlock the door and brief the occupants. *Example: Active shooter*



### **Evacuate - To the Announced Location**

This involves moving students from one location to another. Evacuate is always followed by a location. For example, the command may be "evacuate to the gym". Administrators, teachers, and building staff work together to quickly, quietly, and safely evacuate to the evacuation point. Students and staff will leave all personal items (backpacks, books, etc.) behind. *Example: Chemical spill inside the school*



### **Shelter - For a Hazard Using a Safety Strategy**

Shelter is called when there is a need for personal protection. Specific instructions are given to students and staff. For example, instead of just announcing "shelter", the command may be "shelter for tornado: drop, cover, and hold". *Example: Tornado*

## CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

DCSD is committed to providing confirmed information to impacted families as soon as possible.

## EMERGENCY ALERTS

When the SRP is activated at your child's school, DCSD will send an emergency alert letting you know via phone, text, and email messaging - based on the emergency notification preferences you have chosen in DCSD's Infinite Campus Parent Portal. These initial notifications may not include many details, as the situation is developing and accurate information is being gathered.

Additional updates will be sent as more information becomes available.

The natural instinct for parents or guardians is to come to the school during an emergency to protect their children.

However, by doing so, they may endanger themselves and their children. Law

enforcement and school personnel are busy responding to the situation. Your arrival or calls may distract them from their work. Please help by following the steps below.

# YOUR ROLE

## WHAT FAMILIES SHOULD DO



### Stay Home

Emergency personnel can better respond to a situation when they have a clear route to the school — less traffic means better access for responders. Stay away until you receive further information.



### Stay Informed

Information will be shared with impacted families as soon as possible. Please know, in some situations, accurate information may take some time to verify and share.



### Be Ready

Be prepared to follow instructions from DCSD. For instance, we may inform families that they need to pick up their child in a formalized, controlled release. Be sure to act quickly, but also listen carefully for details about where to pick up your child and what to bring.



Dear Douglas County Families,

In order to create an environment conducive to learning, students and staff must feel safe and secure.

That is why we have partnered closely to create a comprehensive safety plan consisting of many layers, which are designed to protect our children and to respond in the event of a threat at one of our schools.

Working together, we have not only implemented best practices realized after school tragedies here in Colorado and across the nation, but we've gone further - implementing several innovative safety initiatives, including:

- The first-in-the-nation School Marshal Program, in which law enforcement officers make multiple unannounced visits to our elementary schools on a daily basis
- Dedicated School Resource Officers stationed at each comprehensive middle and high school
- An interoperable communication system that allows school staff to talk directly to first responders
- Joint training for all Douglas County first responders
- A network of digital cameras monitoring each school
- The Youth Education and Safety in Schools (YESS) program that empowers students to handle many issues including cyber bullying, sexting, and school violence
- The Safe2Tell program which allows students, staff, and community members to report concerns anonymously

We know that it takes all of us working together to keep our children safe. Families play an important role.

We ask parents and guardians to remain vigilant and to report anything that might be out-of-the-ordinary. During an emergency, we ask that you partner with us to keep students and staff at our schools safe. This means allowing us to focus on the safety of students, staff, and the community by staying home, staying informed, and being ready.

Despite best intentions, when families show up at their child's school or call our dispatch centers with questions during an emergency, our efforts may be impeded.

We are proud of the work done regarding school safety in Douglas County and thank you for your partnership in helping to keep our students safe.

**Erin Kane**  
Superintendent  
Douglas County School District

**Jack Cauley**  
Chief of Police  
Castle Rock Police Department

**Darren Weekly**  
Sheriff  
Douglas County Sheriff's Office

**Jim Tsurapas**  
Chief of Police  
Parker Police Department

**Kirk Wilson**  
Chief of Police  
Lone Tree Police Department

