NEW PHILADELPHIA
CITY SCHOOLS

SAFETY GUIDE
2025-2026

The safety and well-being of New Philadelphia students, staff and community are our top priority. We recognize that students and staff learn, teach, and reach their fullest potential only when they feel safe and are mentally well.

This guide is intended to highlight our many safety initiatives and educate you on ways you can help us prioritize safety on our campus each day. Through physical, social-emotional, cyber and crisis response safety efforts, we will continue to work toward our mission to provide every student a diverse, quality education with a safe and secure environment.

Physical Safety

Physical safety refers to the protection of everyone who steps foot on our campus — including students, staff, families and the community — from violence, theft, and exposure to weapons or other threats. Physical safety ensures a secure learning environment. Below are tactics we use to secure the physical safety of New Philadelphia Schools.

- All schools conduct fire, safety and shelter-in-place drills with first responders throughout the school year.
- Video cameras are used to monitor activity at all schools.
- All visitors must sign in and wear a visitor badge while on school property.
- All volunteers must pass a criminal background check.
- A School Resource Officer is shared between buildings.
- Staff members at all schools are CPR certified.
- All staff have received information on ALICE Training®, an active shooter response training.
- Threat Assessment Teams are established and trained at each school.
- Staff participate in regular tabletop exercises related to various safety scenarios.

Social-Emotional Wellness

Social-emotional health is the ability to understand and manage our emotions and to form social connections and relationships with those around us. When students and staff are healthy both socially and emotionally, it reduces the chances for a variety of safety incidents. Here are a few ways we support the social-emotional wellness of our students and staff.

- PBIS or Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports are used in classrooms across the district.
- We partner with SpringVale Health Centers for counseling support.
- Extracurricular opportunities (clubs and/or sports) are offered at the middle and high school to engage students in high-interest areas and help them foster relationships.

Cyber Safety

Technology is an integral part of life in the 21st century. New Philadelphia City Schools has a responsibility to teach students to use technology safely and to protect the district's network from viruses and other cyber threats. We take the following cyber safety precautions:

- Use 24/7 monitoring and content filtering for student devices while in use on and off campus.
- Employ antivirus and antimalware programs to protect staff and student user accounts from being compromised.

Crisis Response

School crises can include anything from a weather event, power outage, cyber attack or pandemic to the death of a staff member or student or an active shooter situation. New Philadelphia Schools work with local, state and federal agencies to ensure we are prepared for any event with the potential to impact the safety of our school community. The district:

- Fosters good relationships with the Tuscarawas County Sheriff's Office, and New Philadelphia Police and Fire Departments.
- Routinely participates in tabletop exercises using hypothetical scenarios to plan for a variety of crises.
- Maintains up-to-date Emergency Operations Plans that outline what to do in the event of an emergency.
- Actively participates on the Tuscarawas County Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency Planning Board.

If there is a crisis, our promise to our families is that we will communicate with you as quickly as possible while focusing first on the safety of our students and staff. Here is how you can help us resolve a crisis:

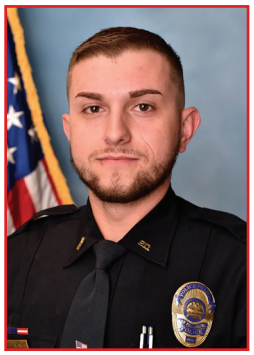
DON'T

- Call the school. Phone lines may be needed for emergency communication.
- Go to the school. This can restrict first responders from accessing the building, and in some situations, students may be relocated to another place.
- Share information you don't know to be true on social media or through other means of communication. We must focus on the safety issue at hand without fighting misinformation.

DO

- Make sure your contact information is up to date in the Parent Portal. We will use this information to communicate updates via text, phone, and/or email as often as possible.

Geoff DeMattio
School Resource Officer



Darren Avon
School Resource Officer

Tessa Pohovey
New Philadelphia Police Department Chief

Orvis Campbell
Tuscarawas County Sheriff

Jim Parrish
New Philadelphia Fire Department Chief

Continuous Improvement

Our work in the area of safety and well-being is never complete. Students thrive in schools that focus on continuous improvement no matter the subject area. We will continue to assess our safety practices and adjust accordingly.

Resources

Safer Ohio School Tip Line

Call 844-723-3764 to anonymously report information to school officials and law enforcement about threats to student safety. The tip line can be used for:

- Bullying and cyberbullying incidents
- Self-harm or suicidal behaviors
- Verbal or written threats observed toward students, staff or the school as a whole
- Weapons/suspicious devices on or near school property
- Gang-related activity
- Illegal drug use

If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health crisis, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 988.

How to Talk to Your Child About School Safety

According to the American Psychological Association, parents/caregivers are the single most influential people in a child's life when it comes to making them feel safe and equipping them with the resources and skills they need to be successful as adults.

Here are some ways you can ensure your child stays safe at school — and wherever they go.

1. **See Something Say Something**
   Teach your child to say something to a trusted adult anytime they see something out of the ordinary or feel something is off.

2. **Make time to talk**
   Asking your child about their day reinforces that you care and encourages them to share information openly and honestly.

3. **Reassure them**
   Reassure your child that schools and other social settings are safe.

4. **Review safety procedures**
   These procedures will vary depending on the age of your child. For example, in early elementary school, this may include teaching them to look both ways before crossing the street and helping them memorize their phone number and/or address. For high school students, it may involve reminding them to not text while driving and steering clear of those they don't know on social media.

We all play a part in keeping our schools and community safe. Thank you for your support of your child and the New Philadelphia City Schools community.

Key Definitions and Communication Process

School Closure

When schools are temporarily closed due to inclement weather, loss of utilities, or another unexpected event.

Communication Plan - We will communicate as soon as possible and send information to local radio and TV stations as well as post on the district website and on social media.

Evacuation

When staff and students are asked to leave the building due to a safety concern. If the evacuation is believed to be temporary, staff and students will stay on-site. If it is believed to be a prolonged event, staff and students may be relocated to an off-site location.

Communication Plan - We will communicate as soon as the building has been evacuated and students/staff are deemed safe.

Reunification

This takes place when staff and students have been relocated to an off-site location after an evacuation and families are required to pick up their student(s).

Communication Plan - We will update as often as necessary and provide logistical information.

Alarm Drop

When an alarm goes off but there is no immediate threat to those in the building.

Communication Plan - We will email if necessary.

Drill

Mandated safety exercises that include evacuation, fire, tornado and lockdown drills.

Communication Plan - Routine drills are not communicated.

Lockdown

When an emergency affecting the school prevents the safe evacuation of a building, staff and students are put on lockdown or kept inside the building and/or classroom.

Yellow Lockdown: No immediate safety threat. Students and staff are instructed to stay in their classrooms with no movement in the hallways and learning may continue.

Red Lockdown: All building and classroom doors are locked and there is no movement in the hallways.

Communication Plan - We will communicate as soon as possible and follow up when the lockdown has cleared with more detailed information.

Please note: Each situation has its own set of challenges that may change how and when we communicate with families. Our goal remains to communicate with you as often and as transparently as possible. Thank you for your patience and understanding in the event of a safety situation.