Edition 6, Fall 2025

Safety Bulletin



Dear Winnetka Families,

Thank you for your partnership in keeping our students and community safe! We ask that you kindly view this video message for further information on our collaborative efforts toward fostering safety and security. We look forward to connecting with you at fall and winter events in our schools and Village.

Most Sincerely,

Dr. Kelly Tess
Superintendent of Schools District 36

Mr. Ray Finnerty
Dir. of Safety & Security District 36

Chief Brian O'Connell
Winnetka Police Department

Scan QR Code to view the video message from the district

E-Scooter and Other Motor-Driven Vehicle Regulations Effective Immediately



The Village Council passed ordinances this fall regulating the use of motor-driven vehicles, including electric scooters (e-scooters), electric bicycles (e-bikes) and motor-driven cycles (commonly known as e-dirt bikes or e-motos). These ordinances are effective immediately and violations can result in a fine: both to the violator and their responsible parent, when applicable.

Operators of e-scooters must be at least 18 years of age and possess a valid driver's license. Operators of e-bikes must be at least 16 years of age or accompanied by a responsible adult. A driver's license is not necessary to ride an e-bike, but a helmet must be worn at all times. Operators of motor-driven vehicles must be at least 16 years of age, possess a valid driver's license, and have the vehicle properly titled and registered. In either case, it is a violation to alter the vehicle's original manufacturer's design to change its speed, method of propulsion, braking, or other operations. It is also unlawful to operate any vehicle carrying more passengers than it was designed or equipped for.

E-scooters, e-bikes, and other motor-driven vehicles cannot be driven on public sidewalks or within Village-owned parks, in Village-owned or in Village-maintained parking lots.

Pick Up/Drop Off Protocol

As families are navigating traffic patterns around our schools, here are several important factors to keep in mind:

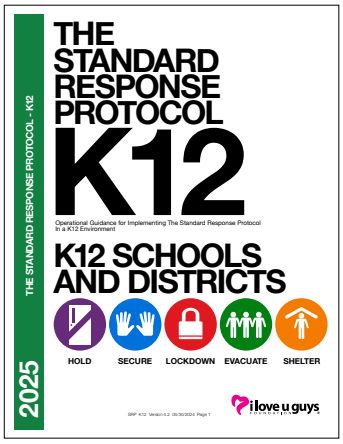
- When dropping your children off, please make sure you pull up to the curb and the child exits curbside
- Do not double park to let your children out of the car, this is not only illegal but dangerous
- Always be aware of your surroundings and mindful of children who are walking or biking to school
- The Winnetka Police strictly enforce school zone speed limits and cell phone use while driving
- Our crossing guards have a very important job; please respect them by listening to their instructions at all times
- Remind your children to use the crosswalks when crossing the street and to walk–not run–when crossing

Bike Safety

In order to prevent traffic-related incidents from occurring in our community, it is important to be vigilant as a rider, pedestrian, or driver when traveling through town. Our school principals review bike and pedestrian safety practices with students at the start of the school year and again in the spring when bike riding increases. We ask that you also take a moment to re-review the following information with your family:

- Illinois law prohibits the use of cell phones or other electronic devices while in a school zone, even if it's hands free. It is dangerous and is enforced as a moving violation by the police.
  - Please do not use pick up and drop off time to check texts, etc. This potentially endangers others.
  - Please remind your students that they should not be using cell phones or other electronic devices while biking.
- Crossing guards are present at busier intersections near our schools to assist with safety. Please respect the authority of the crossing guards and follow their directions
- Please talk to children to ensure that they understand the importance of using caution and following all traffic signals.
  - Note that there are not stop signs at every intersection, especially on Oak and Elm Streets, which are heavily used thoroughfares to Crow Island, Skokie, and Washburne.
- We STRONGLY recommend that all students who bike, skateboard, or scooter to school wear a helmet, regardless of age.
- Students should bike on the sidewalk wherever possible, and be respectful to pedestrians. Also, children are expected to walk their bikes through crosswalks.
- Each elementary school also has specific traffic procedures and parking restrictions that are enforced by police. We encourage you to review these procedures and contact your building administrator if you are unclear.
- The speed limit in our school zones is 20 miles per hour during school days. For the safety of all, please follow the posted speed limit.
- Recommended safe routes to each neighborhood school are as follows:
  - Crow Island School
  - Greeley School
  - Hubbard Woods School





"I Love U Guys" Standard Response Protocol (SRP)

The Winnetka Public Schools is utilizing the ""I Love U Guys" Standard Response Protocol, which includes a consistent vocabulary regarding response to a variety of unforeseen situations. For students, this provides continuity of expectations and actions throughout their educational career. For staff, this becomes a simpler process for training and drills. For first responders, the common vocabulary and protocols establish a greater predictability that persists through the duration of an incident. Students and staff will practice Standard Response Protocol throughout the course of emergency drills this year. In June 2025, over 50 staff members and first responders engaged in Reunification Training led by "I Love U Guys" personnel.

The "I Love U Guys" Foundation's programs for response and reunification are used in more than 50,000 schools, districts, departments, agencies, organizations and communities around the world. They are created through the research-based best practices of school administrators, psychologists, public space safety experts, families, and first responders.

Text For Help

The Safe, Secure and Healthy Schools Resolution, passed by the Board in September 2022, solidified the District's commitment to ensuring students, staff, parents and community members have access to an additional resource to report concerns of any kind regarding themselves or others. As a result, the District has recently partnered with SAFE2HELP Illinois. Safe2HELP is a resource tailored for teens and pre-teens, but is open to all members of the Winnetka community, including staff. A concerned person can dial 844–4-SAFEIL or text "SAFE2 (72332)" and be connected by text message with a licensed social worker.. While we encourage students, staff and families to report concerns within our schools, allowing us to follow our internal safety protocol, we also want to ensure there is awareness of this reporting option outside of school hours.

Support for Mental Health

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) offers resources for parents and teachers in talking to children about a variety of topics. In addition, each of our five schools is staffed with a school psychologist and at least one full time social worker. We highly recommend that students and families access the resources available in their schools. Each of the five schools incorporate the four anchor strategies of RULER's Social Emotional Learning curriculum as a means to support these needs amongst our students and comply with state learning standards. The State of Illinois requires all public schools to include social emotional learning standards in annual instructional delivery.



Securly Home

The District has a resource to enable parents to receive a weekly email sharing their student's web activity using their school account. An introductory video can be viewed here. For a detailed overview of the capabilities and how to get started, watch this video.

Additional resources:

- Home App Walkthrough.pdf
- Securly's Standard Filtering Categories



BE SMART

Safe Storage

The Board's **Safe, Secure and Healthy Schools Resolution** included an update to our Parent/Student handbook to include information about the obligation of any parent who is a gun owner to comply with state guidance regarding secure storage of firearms under **Illinois HB2254 Safe Gun Storage Act**. All families must sign the Parent/Student handbook annually as children are registered for the new school year.

The **Be SMART framework** is designed to help parents and adults normalize conversations about gun safety and take responsible actions that can prevent child gun deaths and injuries.

- **Secure** all guns in your home and vehicles
- **Model** responsible behavior around guns
- **Ask** about the presence of unsecured guns in other homes
- **Recognize** the role of guns in suicide
- **Tell** your peers to be SMART

Learn more about secure arm storage here: **Gun Safety Resources | Be SMART (besmartforkids.org)** If you have a firearm that you would like to surrender to be destroyed, you may bring it to the Winnetka Police Department at 410 Green Bay Road at any time, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This is a service the Police Department has always offered, so please keep this in mind if you have a gun you may want to destroy. The **Village Code** indicates that no one will be asked for identification, nor will they be subject to prosecution for turning in any handgun or ammunition.

SAFETY

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Resources for Families

If you are looking for how to better understand AI tools and insight into monitoring your child(rens') use of the technology, review **Common Sense Media's AI evaluations**. Common Sense Media is well known for their evaluation of TV Shows, movies, and games/websites to help parents make informed decisions on whether to give their child access. Similarly, these AI evaluations help them to understand the benefits and risks of various platforms, as well as how they might be used. Users should be restricted to age 13 and above in the absence of adult supervision.





Safety Tips for the Fall & Winter Months

In partnership with the Winnetka Police and Fire Departments, Director of Safety & Security Ray Finnerty shares a few safety tips to keep in mind during the colder months and upcoming holiday travel season:

- Be cautious around Lake Michigan, particularly regarding letting children or pets play on or around ice. It is never recommended to walk on the lake, even if it appears frozen.
- Be sure to unplug holiday lights or keep them on a timer to prevent fire.
- If you have a fireplace in your home, first ensure your chimney is cleaned annually.
- If you will be out of town, avoid posting specifics on social media, use a timer for lights, and ensure a friend or neighbor is able to help bring in any packages that may arrive while you are away.
- Remain vigilant regarding financial fraud and regularly check bank statements to ensure there aren't any unauthorized charges. Thieves typically start small to see if they are able to remain undetected.
- For your safety, use caution when shoveling or snow-blowing. If you utilize a plow service, ensure children and pets are not outside while snow removal is in progress.
- Pack an emergency kit in your car containing blankets, flares, non-perishable food and water first aid kit, flashlight with extra batteries in an abundance of caution for travel in inclement weather.
- In the case of extreme cold, leave faucets on at a steady drip throughout the day to avoid frozen pipes.



District/School Safety & Security Protocol

- District and building safety plans are thoroughly developed in conjunction with the Winnetka Police and Fire Departments and reviewed on an annual basis as an administrative team and school staff at all five campuses.
- The district is committed to sending out timely messages if/when an emergency occurs in one of our buildings.
- Drills are practiced by all adults and students unless parents opt their children out of the drill (this must be allowed by law).
- The district has completed the implementation of upgraded security features for all of our schools, including secure vestibules, new cameras and other security features throughout all five buildings.
- Custodial and maintenance teams engage in regular building sweeps to ensure all exterior doors are closed and locked.
- All school visitors must submit their ID to be scanned before being allowed access to the building. IDs will be held and badging distributed to identify visitors until they exit the building.
- All employees, outside vendors (club sponsors, contractor, utility providers, etc.) and substitutes, must undergo a state and federal background check before being allowed to work in our schools/access our buildings. This includes all employees of Bulley & Andrews and associated vendors completing construction and renovation work.

Communication Regarding Safety Matters

The chart below outlines current and adapted District communications responses relating to safety matters.

Communication Scenario	Corresponding Protocol
Unplanned Ambulance/Police/Fire visit to school for medical support for individual student or staff member	Timely communication from Principal to class or whole school (depending on what was observed/occurred)
Unplanned or accidental activation of safety drill (i.e. alarm triggered accidentally, smoke in kitchen at Washburne)	Timely communication from Principal to whole school (depending on what was observed/occurred) to notify families
Planned safety drill including Police Department/Fire Department	Proactive communication to families from Principal/Director of Safety & Security before drill with opportunity to opt a student out
Safety concern related to building, students or staff (i.e. situation that requires Police involvement and/or implementation of Standard Response Protocol)	Timely tailored communications to families based on situation from Superintendent & Director of Safety & Security, always acknowledging any involvement of Winnetka Police and Fire Departments





