



OLENTANGY SCHOOLS

Safety, Security, & Preparedness Guide

SAFETY



What is school safety?

School safety in Olentangy Schools includes **physical safety**, **psychological safety**, and **social safety**. We prioritize keeping our students safe from anything that threatens their physical, mental, and emotional wellness.



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 students are safe in school at all times is a top priority and key responsibility of our district.



Safety at Olentangy

PLAN. TRAIN. MITIGATE.

Olentangy Schools places the highest priority on the safety, security, and well-being of our students and staff. We are committed to creating a safe, supportive learning environment where every student can learn and flourish.

Our district has a Director of Safety, Security, and Preparedness, a Director of Wellness, overnight security in many buildings, and building and administrative staff trained in reunification and crisis incidents. 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 schools regularly.

Our comprehensive approach to safety combines prevention, preparedness, strong partnerships, and clear communication. In collaboration with local first responders, we maintain a district-wide Emergency Preparedness Plan designed to address a wide range of situations, including lockdowns, severe weather, medical emergencies, and other potential safety concerns. Safety resources are available in every building, and both building- and district-level safety teams are prepared to respond and provide support when needed.

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 of 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 TEAMS

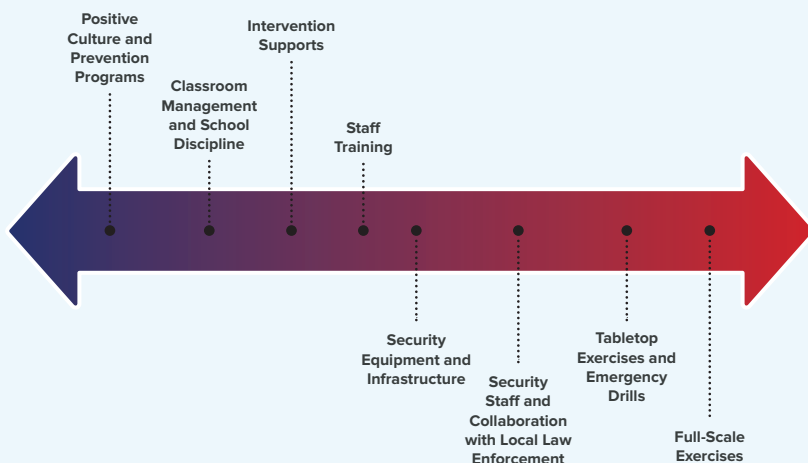
In compliance with Ohio House Bill 123, Olentangy Schools has a multidisciplinary Threat Assessment Team that includes administrators, mental health professionals, SROs, safety coordinators, and local law enforcement. The team receives evidence-based training to identify potential threats, assess their 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

Throughout the school year, Olentangy Schools conducts regular safety drills and preparedness exercises to ensure students and staff are familiar with emergency procedures. Each building completes required fire drills, tornado drills, and additional state-mandated safety drills, including age-appropriate lockdown scenarios.

These efforts are strengthened through our ongoing partnership with the Delaware County Sheriff's Office, Ohio Emergency Medical Services, the Ohio Department of Public Safety, School Safety Center, the Delaware County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, providing training, safety education, and regular assessments of our school buildings and procedures.

Prevention to Preparedness Continuum



Adapted from National School Safety and Security Services Threat Continuum.

MITIGATE

During the school year, on-site school safety coordinators and SROs 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 the physical and operational safety features found throughout our buildings:

- **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. All Olentangy school buildings have a security vestibule upon entry with two-way communication at the entrance. After being invited in, visitors must report to the main office upon arrival and provide identification.
- **Visitor Management Systems:** The U.S. Department of Education's guidelines for school security recommend limiting school access points and implementing a visitor control system. Olentangy's visitor control and tracking system requires all building visitors to check-in when arriving at a building using state-issued identification. Information for school visitors is available on our district website.
- **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 Delaware County Sheriff's Office during an emergency.



Scan the QR code to view Olentangy's Visitors School Procedures.

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!"** hotline 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 uses 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

Olentangy Schools utilizes the “I Love U Guys” Foundation’s Standard Response Protocol (SRP)—a response enhancement for all hazards, designed to provide consistent, clear, shared language and actions among all students, staff, and first responders. It is action based, and allows organizations, first responders, and parents to share a specific vocabulary for quick and coordinated action. It acts as a tool for training which develops the muscle memory necessary to appropriately act in moments of crisis.

The SRP is based on five actions: **Hold**, **Secure**, **Lockdown**, **Evacuate**, and **Shelter**. 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 Olentangy Schools, the Delaware County Sheriff’s Office 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 Standard Response Protocol handbook.



OTHER COMMONLY USED TERMS

- **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 coordinated response that occurs after a crisis to promote healing, provide support, and reduce the risk of further distress among students, staff, and families. Postvention efforts may include counseling and support services, referrals for additional care, follow-up monitoring, and clear, accurate communication with the school community.
- **Prevention:** The proactive efforts taken to build protective factors that promote student well-being and reduce the likelihood of mental health concerns, substance misuse, and suicide. Prevention strategies often include teaching coping skills, problem-solving, healthy relationship skills, help-seeking behaviors, and ways to respond to challenging situations.
- **Protective Factors:** The relationships, skills, and resources that promote health, well-being, and resilience while helping individuals cope with stress and adversity. Protective factors may include supportive relationships, positive social connections, healthy coping strategies, problem-solving skills, a sense of belonging, and access to resources and activities that support physical and mental 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. Reunification location will be shared during the event.
- **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 an individual is at risk for suicide and other self-destructive behaviors, such as substance abuse.
- **SRO:** The 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. SROs 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 **Delaware County Sheriff's Office**

- Facebook and Instagram: @DelawareCoSheriff

Visit these websites for major updates:

- DelawareCountySheriff.com
- Olentangy.k12.oh.us

Follow **Olentangy Schools** on Facebook, Instagram or Nextdoor.

Follow our **local municipalities**:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| • Delaware County | co.delaware.oh.us |
| • Orange Township | orangetwp.org |
| • Berkshire Township | berkshiretp.org |
| • Berlin Township | berlintwp.us |
| • Concord Township | concordtp.org |
| • Genoa Township | genoatwp.com |
| • Liberty Township | libertytp.org |
| • Delaware Township | delawaretownshipohio.org |
| • City of Delaware | delawareohio.net |
| • City of Columbus | columbus.gov |
| • City of Westerville | westerville.org |
| • City of Powell | cityofpowell.us |

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:

- Early communications briefly summarizes the situation and follow up communications provide more details.
- Communications are usually only sent to the school(s) affected.
- Communications do not share discipline details of the individuals involved, as we must protect the rights and privacy of our students and staff.

Olentangy does not send district-wide 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. 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 Delaware County Sheriff's Office (or other corresponding police jurisdiction) for public communication. The DCSO assumes responsibility for communicating updates as it relates to the criminal aspect; Olentangy Schools will share changes to operational updates for school procedures. Information regarding a criminal incident will be verified through the investigating law enforcement agency before it is released by the district, and information shared by Olentangy Schools may be limited to avoid interfering with an active law enforcement investigation. Parents and families should follow the Sheriff's Office 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 Delaware County Sheriff's Office, your city/township, and Olentangy Schools. Check email, text messages, and social media.
- ✓ **Plan** to pick your child up at a reunification spot, if necessary. Location shared during an event.
- ✓ **Bring** your identification for pickup.
- ✓ **Pause** before calling or texting your child. Their primary focus should be on following the directions of staff or 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.

Maintaining safe schools is a shared responsibility

Families can support school safety by:

- Encouraging students to **report concerns**
- Using the **Stay Safe. Speak Up! Reporting Hotline** when needed: staysafespeakup.app/Welcome/district/OLSD
- Keeping **emergency contact information** current in PowerSchool
- Following **school and district guidance** during emergencies

Things you can do right now

- **Ensure** that the emergency contact information for your student is updated each school year.
- **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.
- 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.
- **Help your child identify** trusted adults, in and out of school, that they can share concerns with about themselves or others.
- **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.
- **Create a backpack emergency card** that includes the emergency contact information from PowerSchool and any specific instructions for your student.

Safety Tips

- **Dial 911:** In an emergency (life-threatening) situation, you should dial 911 first and then have someone nearby contact district administration.
- **Report:** If you hear someone make a threat or observe something of a suspicious or potentially threatening nature, you should report it to a SRO or district administration without hesitation. Outside of school hours, use the Stay Safe. Speak Up! reporting hotline or contact law enforcement directly.
- **Be aware of your surroundings and trust your instincts:** If you feel unsafe or uncomfortable, seek the assistance of an Olentangy Schools employee or administrator.
- **Be mindful:** Watch for pedestrians, especially children who are walking or biking to school, or waiting at bus stops.
- **Drive sensibly:** Obey the posted speed limits, do not pass other vehicles, change lanes, or make U-turns while driving in a school zone.
- **Familiarize yourself with bus signals:**
 - **Yellow flashing lights** indicate that a bus is preparing to stop, and that motorists should begin to slow down.
 - **Red lights and an extended stop sign** mean that the bus has come to a stop and children are getting on or off the bus. At this time, drivers travelling in both directions must remain stopped until the lights turn off and the stop sign is back in place.
- **Avoid distracted driving:** Do not text and drive and use a hands-free device.

Bikes, E-Bikes, and E-Scooters

E-bikes are legally treated as bicycles, meaning riders must follow the same traffic laws as cars. You must obey all traffic signs, stop at red lights, ride in the direction of traffic, and use hand signals to communicate your intentions.



HAND SIGNALS

Universal cycling hand signals keep you predictable to drivers and pedestrians:

- **Left Turn:** Extend your left arm and hand straight out to the left.
- **Right Turn:** Extend your right arm and hand straight out, OR bend your left arm upward at a 90-degree angle with a flat palm.
- **Slowing Down/Stopping:** Extend your left arm downward at a 45-degree angle, with your palm facing open to the rear.
- **Road Hazards:** Point your finger downward in the direction of a pothole, debris, or gravel to warn riders behind you.



SIGNS & RULES OF THE ROAD

- **Obey Traffic Signs:** Stop fully at stop signs and yield to oncoming traffic.
- **Traffic Signals:** Treat traffic lights as cars do. Do not run red lights or dart across pedestrian crosswalks while riding a bike.
- **Yield to Pedestrians:** Pedestrians always have the right of way, especially in crosswalks. Use a bell or an audible greeting before passing on a multi-use path.
- **Lane Positioning:** Ride as far to the right as safely practical. Use designated bike lanes whenever available.
- **Sidewalks/Crosswalks:** Avoid riding on sidewalks, as it is largely prohibited in many cities. Always dismount and walk your E-bike if you must use the sidewalk.

Bikes, E-Bikes, and E-Scooters



EQUIPMENT & E-BIKE SPECIFICS

- **Visibility:** You are required to have a white front light and a red rear light/reflector when riding at night or in low visibility.
- **Helmet Laws:** Helmets are legally mandatory in many regions, particularly for younger riders.
- **E-bike Class Restrictions:** Your E-bike (whether Class 1, 2, or 3) dictates where you can legally ride. For example, Class 3 models (reaching up to 28 mph) are often restricted from multi-use paths and pedestrian trails.

Always check your specific municipality's ordinances, as local parks or city centers may have different E-bike guidelines.

Olentangy's student handbook includes a section on riding Bikes/E-bikes/Scooters/Skateboard to School:

"If a student chooses to ride a bike, E-bike, scooter, or skateboard to school, they are required to dismount upon arrival on school property. E-bikes and electric scooters must be powered OFF and disabled while on school grounds. Students must walk or push their bike or scooter while on school property. Skateboards must be carried and not ridden while on school property. These expectations apply before, during, and after the school day, including arrival and dismissal. The school highly recommends helmet use for students using bikes, E-bikes, scooters, or skateboards as a mode of transportation."

For Teen Drivers

Teens are often surrounded by distractions and have to learn how to get themselves to school on time and to do it safely. Teen drivers can prepare themselves by familiarizing themselves with these school safety tips:

- **Put down the phone:** Teendriving.com reports that in a recent poll of drivers ages 16–19, over 50% admitted to texting while driving. Taking your eyes off the road to look at your phone for even a split-second could result in a serious accident. Many states have laws against using a phone while driving for this reason. Never text and drive, and always use a hands-free device if you need to make a call while driving.
- **Pay attention to driving:** A recent study by the National Safety Council showed that 14.6% of accidents involving teen drivers were a result of their attention to passengers in the car. For newer drivers, placing a limit on the number of passengers in the car helps reduce the likelihood of distractions.
- **Buckle up:** Make sure your teens wear their seatbelt and make sure that any passengers in the car buckle up, as well.
- **Know the rules for driving in school zones:** Obey posted speed limits, do not pass other vehicles, change lanes, or make U-turns.
- **Don't rush:** Accidents happen when drivers ignore basic school safety tips and are in a hurry! Make sure there's plenty of time to reach the destination and find parking.
- **Secure your car and its contents:** Before getting out of the car, make sure any valuables are stored out of sight. And don't forget to lock it!
- **Practice driving with parents:** According to the National Safety Council, the more time teens spend driving with their parents, the more likely they are to avoid a crash.
- **Drive within your limits:** Obey speed limits, leave plenty of following distance, and avoid risky behaviors like speeding, tailgating, or driving when tired or under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Safe, defensive driving gives you more time to react to unexpected situations.



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.

School Resource Officer Program

The School Resource Officer (SRO) program is a collaborative effort between the Sheriff's office, certified law enforcement officers, educators, students, parents, and the community at large, which establishes and maintains a close partnership with the school administration in an effort to provide a safe school environment. The SRO is visible within the school community, attends and participates in school functions, builds working relationships with the school's staff, as well as with student and parent groups.

The SRO initiates interaction with students in the classroom and general areas of the school building. This helps to promote and reflect an image as a positive role model. In addition, the SRO implements crime and drug programs, positive peer relationship programs, and conducts security inspections to deter criminal or delinquent activities.

The goals of the SRO program are to:

- **Promote** a safe environment, positive development and personal responsibility to young people, families, teachers and school communities.
- **Provide** a visible and positive image of law enforcement by serving as educators, role models and confidants for students.
- **Assist** young people in making positive choices in their lives.

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 your child's age, acknowledge and support their feelings by creating opportunities to talk about their concerns and helping them develop healthy ways to cope.



Student Wellness

SAFETY BEGINS WITH WELLNESS

Safety includes both physical and emotional well-being. Our school counselors, mental health specialists and student support teams are available to assist students before, during, and after challenging situations. We are committed to creating an environment where students feel safe, supported, and connected.

All safety drills and conversations are conducted in an age-appropriate and supportive manner to help students feel prepared and confident—not alarmed.



What to know about keeping students healthy and well

Student wellness begins with the relationships, experiences, and supports that surround children from an early age. Strong connections with caring adults and peers, opportunities for meaningful involvement, healthy habits, and positive protective factors all contribute to emotional well-being, resilience, and the ability to cope with life's challenges. Activities such as athletics, the arts, service opportunities, leadership experiences, and personal interests can provide a sense of purpose, connection, and belonging while serving as healthy outlets during times of stress.

- **Positive Relationships and Social Networks:** Encouraging participation in activities that foster social connections can help children build friendships, experience joy, develop a sense of belonging, and discover their interests and strengths. Involvement in sports, the arts, clubs, and other group activities also provide opportunities to connect with positive role models, which supports healthy development and helps young people explore purpose and build meaningful skills and relationships.
- **Sleep:** The following are recommendations from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (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 two 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:** Build healthy routines such as exercise, mindfulness, self-reflection, and engage in calming or restorative activities. Maintain a balanced schedule, help students manage school responsibilities while still having time to rest, connect, and enjoy life outside of academics.
- **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 or are concerned.

Many things take place in school that contribute to students' sense of wellness. Schools play an important role in supporting student wellness through coordinated efforts that promote healthy activities, teach positive decision-making, and provide multiple levels of support. Educators are trained to recognize and respond to the warning signs and connect students with appropriate supports, while health teachers provide instruction on maintaining healthy lifestyles. School counselors and mental health specialists work together to offer both preventative supports and more intensive services for students who need them, and are available at each school.

Additional Resources



Olentangy Schools Safety, Security, and Preparedness Department



Olentangy Schools Wellness Department



Stay Safe. Speak Up! Reporting Hotline



PowerSchool Update Instructions



Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: Dial 988



OLENTANGY SCHOOLSSM

Flourish Here.

Ensuring that our schools are safe requires attention, cooperation, and communication with many partners.

This guidebook was created with review and approval by the Delaware County Sheriff's Office.

Notes

[illegible]

References

www.healthychildren.org

U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Ohio Department of Public Safety—Ohio School Safety Center

National School Safety and Security Services



OLENTANGY SCHOOLSSM

Flourish Here.