

Appleton Area School District

Ongoing Efforts to Improve School Safety



A safe learning environment is the top priority for all schools in the Appleton Area School District. One important way that we maintain a safe learning environment is to practice our safety drills on a regular basis. Tornado, fire, and intruder drills provide our students and staff with the opportunity to practice what to do in case of an emergency. This year we are implementing changes to our intruder drills. Over this past summer, principals across the District worked with our police school liaison officers to be trained in a new intruder response process called **ALICE**, which stands for **A**lert, **L**ockdown, **I**nform, **C**ounter, and **E**vacuate. ALICE is a national training program, which was developed by school safety experts after the Columbine tragedy to teach survival strategies during a life-threatening event. ALICE is endorsed by law enforcement agencies across the country and in line with recommendations from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Federal Management Agency (FEMA).

The District believes that ALICE is a necessary change that has allowed us to rethink how we will respond to a school intruder. ALICE training has caused our staff members to think closely about their surroundings at school, and consider what they will do ahead of time in the case of an intruder in the building. ALICE training reinforces that all staff are empowered to make decisions in the best interest of their students' safety. This includes all staff members knowing that they can sound an alert on the school intercom, call 911, barricade their classroom, or evacuate their students from the building if that is what will keep the students safe. The process to train all staff members on ALICE is underway and will continue throughout the year. We want you to be informed about our new intruder drill process so that you can thoroughly understand the reasons why we are making these changes and feel comfortable about how your child will be informed of these changes.

There are a couple of ways you can become more informed about ALICE.

- Attend a PTA/PTO meeting focusing on how ALICE is being implemented. Please check with your child's school for the specific PTA/PTO meeting date. This will be a great opportunity for you to ask any questions you might have.
- Visit the AASD website at https://www.aasd.k12.wi.us/families/school_safety_and_preparedness/preparedness_drills to view documents and links specific to ALICE. There is much information on the site that can better inform you about ALICE.

Should you wish to learn more about plans across our school district to improve school safety, including ALICE, please feel free to contact Greg Hartjes (Chairperson of the District Safety Committee) at (920) 997-1399 ext. 2032. School safety will always be a top priority in the Appleton Area School District. We appreciate your support!