



A Parent Guide To School Emergencies

Bethel Park School District



The Bethel Park School District is committed to maintaining a safe and secure learning environment for our students and staff. The School District has established policies and procedures that have been designed to effectively deal with an emergency incident should it occur in our School District and community. These policies have been established in cooperation with the Bethel Park Police Department, which continues to be a valuable partner in our effort to maintain a safe and secure school environment.

Each of our schools has its own critical incident plan, specific to the staff, the facility and the students in that school. Each school also has a safety and security team which reviews the plan regularly with our school district police and BP Police. Additionally, we conduct safety drills in collaboration with the BPPD, Fire Department and other community response teams to ensure our plans are being implemented correctly and to allow us to make adjustments as necessary.

The District has established a Crisis Prevention and Management Committee comprised of District administrators, teachers, parents, community members, school police officers and first responders (police/fire/EMS) to address any issues or concerns, and provide feedback regarding the District's safety procedures.

Visiting Our Schools

All Bethel Park Schools have updated secure entrances. Parents are welcome visitors to our schools and we ask that you comply with our visitor procedures in order to maintain a safe environment for our students and staff.

- **All visitors will be required to use the Main Entrance** and identify themselves and their purpose for visiting to the office personnel, who will allow visitors to enter the building.
- Upon entrance, **visitors are to go directly to the Main Office, to present valid photo identification**

and obtain a Visitor's Pass, which must be worn during the visit.

- Visitor Instructions are posted at the Main Entrances of all school buildings.

PLEASE NOTE: Weapons of any kind are *strictly prohibited* on Bethel Park School District Property, including vehicles that are parked on school property.

Keeping Student Emergency Contact Information Updated

During an emergency, it is vital that the school district have accurate and up-to-date emergency contact information for all students. In an emergency, the District will contact parents via telephone and email using the School Messenger Notification Service. **If your telephone number(s) or email address changes, please contact the main office at all of your children's schools** to get your updated contact information immediately entered into the Student Data Base.

In An Emergency

If an emergency situation would occur in our schools, parents will be notified by telephone and email using School Messenger. An emergency message would include basic information about the nature of the emergency. In the event of an evacuation, **you will also be notified where the students are being transported and where you can be re-united with your child.** We have worked with local first responders to establish several reunification points throughout the District. Depending on the situation, we will establish a reunification point and notify you of the specific location, once it has been established.

The Bethel Park School District continually strives to ensure the protection of all of our students and staff. The success of our emergency plans depends on the ongoing partnerships established with staff, students, parents and first responders. We appreciate your

continued cooperation and support to keep our schools safe places for learning!

The District will also communicate with parents in an emergency via:

- **The District's website:** www.bpsd.org
- **The District's Information Line:** 412-854-8407
- **Social Media:** Facebook and Google+ (*Bethel Park School District*) and Twitter (*@bpsdinfo*)
- **Local television stations**

How Parents Can Help In Emergency Situations

For the safety of everyone, parents are asked to wait for instructions from the School District regarding how you can be reunited with your child in an emergency situation.

- **Please do not call the school during an emergency.** If you call the school during an emergency, you will probably not be able to speak with anyone, and you may tie up telephone lines that could be used for communicating with 911 and other first responders.
- **Please pick up your child at the Reunification Point.** While we understand that emotions are high in an emergency situation and parents want to be reunited with their child as quickly as possible, parents who arrive at the school in an emergency will interfere with the ability of First Responders to do their jobs.
- **Please refrain from going to your child's school and follow the instructions from the School District regarding where and when you can be reunited with your child.** Our goal is to get you reunited with your child as quickly as possible, and parents who arrive at the school in an emergency situation only delay the reunification process.

PLEASE NOTE: The Bethel Park School District will release students only to the adult(s) designated on the Student's Emergency Information Card. Photo ID will be required. Please be patient during the reunification process, as it is important to verify that students are being released to the proper adult.

Safety Practices and Procedures

The Bethel Park School District conducts a variety of safety drills throughout the school year, so students and staff can become familiar with the procedures associated with each

of the scenarios. These drills include Fire, Weather and Emergency.

We encourage parents to talk about the drills with their children to emphasize the need to stay calm, not be scared, listen carefully, follow instructions and take the drills seriously. While it is our hope that a real emergency never occurs, these drills are an effective way to ensure that students and staff know and can follow the procedures in an emergency situation.

The Bethel Park School District has trained its staff and is in the process of training our students in the principles of ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter and Evacuate) in the event an armed intruder enters a school. These are nationally recognized protocols for keeping everyone safe in an active weapons situation, and are designed to be age appropriate.

Here is a brief overview of ALICE:

A – Alert – It is important in an emergency situation that people know what is happening and where. For example, if an intruder is on the first floor near the library, it is important to communicate that information so teachers and students can decide if the best course of action is to lock down or evacuate, depending where they are in the building.

L – Lockdown – In a lockdown situation, students and staff are encouraged to secure the door and create a barricade to deter entrance into a room.

I – Inform – As the situation unfolds, it is important to share as much updated information as possible, such as the intruder has left the cafeteria and is now headed toward the main office. This updated information helps those who may be in a locked down area to decide if they should continue to stay in place or evacuate.

C – Counter – If an intruder enters a classroom, staff and students are encouraged to disrupt/distract the intruder by throwing objects or swarming/overtaking the intruder, rather than only sheltering in place, depending on the situation and the age level of the students.

E – Evacuate – If possible, students and staff are encouraged to get away from the situation as quickly as possible, get outside the building and proceed to the established rally point.

ALICE principles are age-appropriate and are not used in this order, but they are all viable options to be used in emergency situations.

To learn more about ALICE: go to: <http://www.alicetraining.com/>.

