



Southern Lehigh School District

5575 Main Street
Center Valley, Pennsylvania 18034

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Parent/Guardian/Family FAQ's about ALICE School Safety Drills

Q: What is ALICE and ALICE training?

A: As part of ongoing review and updating of the district's safety plan, a new safety protocol called ALICE will be implemented in the unlikely event of an armed intruder in one of our school buildings. This training encourages staff and students to respond based on their situation, rather than rely on centralized instructions in dynamic times of crisis.

ALICE is a federally endorsed safety protocol. **The letters ALICE stand for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate:**

- **Alert**—Inform people of the threat giving as much information as possible.
- **Lockdown**—Students and staff can choose to lockdown and barricade the room that they are in if they determine that it is not safe to evacuate.
- **Inform**—Pass on as much information as possible to others and to First Responders, including calling 911.
- **Counter**—An effort of last resort, if an armed intruder is able to get into the space they are in, individuals can counter with distraction or other tactics.
- **Evacuate**—If it is safe to do so, all are encouraged to evacuate the building, and remove themselves from the threat.

During ALICE training, staff and students are taught and practice the different options for responding to a school intruder who is intent on doing harm. In certain circumstances, the “lock the door and hide” strategy might be appropriate. In some cases, the teacher and students might take precautions to barricade the entrance(s) of the classroom. Under certain conditions, it might be the best decision for the teacher and students to flee the building. The goal of ALICE training is that the strategies learned will increase the chances that our staff and students might survive if a terrible circumstance of an armed intruder ever were to occur.

All Southern Lehigh School District staff have been trained in the ALICE concepts and participated in drills/simulations. Those experiences for staff will continue throughout the summer and next school year. Our principals and teachers will begin to introduce the ALICE strategies to students during drills and practices that will be conducted during the 2018-2019 school year.

Q: Why change these protocols?

A: All Southern Lehigh schools are safe places for our students to be thanks to the cooperation and communication between the Upper Saucon Township and Coopersburg Police Departments, community agencies,

the staff, and families. Just like practicing what we should do in a fire with our monthly fire drills, we want to be sure that we will know what to do if an armed intruder is in a school. All our schools are equipped with a number of safeguards, some seen and others unseen, to keep our students safe. In addition, since we know that violence has become all too frequent in our world, the strategies and mental preparation we use in ALICE preparation are transferable to any public venue our students may find themselves in where a crisis may occur. Research has shown that “lock the door and hide” may not be the only appropriate strategy to be employed. ALICE training provides the opportunity to learn about which are the best actions to take in a dangerous situation.

Q: What does it mean to “counter?” Will our students be taught how to fight?

A: The main intent of Counter is to distract the intruder, not try to physically take on the intruder. During learning around countering, students and staff are not taught how to fight or attack an intruder. An example of counter would be to throw objects at an intruder for a distraction. Being passive or static has typically not shown to be an effective response in most Active Shooter events. There are examples within recent events of school violence where the difference between passive and active responses determined survival chances.

Q: Students’ readiness for this information varies based on age. How will this be communicated to students in age-appropriate ways?

A: We want our children to be prepared for everything, including if an unsafe person was to enter our school. Administrators, staff, and teachers will take the principles and tactics taught in the ALICE training and present the information in non-fearful, empowering ways. We will take into account children’s developmental readiness to ensure that students feel safe and have opportunities to talk about their feelings and reactions.

Q: How will parents be notified if their child’s school is experiencing a crisis?

A: Parent notification will be just like any other school closing or emergency notification. All emergency information would be sent as a Blackboard Connect, text, e-mail, website notification, and posted on Facebook and Twitter. It is vital that all contact information is accurate and complete on the Parent Portal.

Q: How would we pick up our children after an emergency?

A: In the event of a full evacuation, children would be transported to designated safe evacuation sites off school grounds where they will be reunited with parents. Those designated sites are not always communicated prior to an emergency to ensure the safety of students and staff. Parents will be informed about these locations through direct communication.

*please wait to arrive at location until directions are given to allow emergency personnel time to have secured the location

Q: Where can I go for more information about ALICE?

A: You may visit the ALICE website (<https://www.alicetraining.com/>) Contact your school principal with any specific questions.