

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Please see the enclosed NCASD Emergency Response Guide for Parents. The NCASD strongly recommends you keep this Guide where it is easily accessible by you in the event you need it, for example, on the refrigerator door or near the entry to your home. Please make sure to also reference other safety information posted on our website at www.ncasd.com.

NCASD Emergency Response Guide for Parents

The New Castle Area School District has a District Safety and Security Committee working under the direction of the School Safety and Security Coordinator. **Act 44 of 2018**, which was signed into law on June 22, 2018, amends the Public School Code of 1949 by further providing for school safety and security measures.

The New Castle Area School District has detailed emergency plans which have been developed in collaboration with the New Castle Police Department and the Lawrence County Department of Public Safety. Should a critical or emergency situation arise, the appropriate response will be initiated.

DURING AN EMERGENCY: RESPONSE COMMUNICATION

The best action parents can take during an emergency is to avoid the instinct to call your child or rush to the school, but rather stay close to their phone. The district will utilize the notification messaging system (call, text, email) to provide directions to parents. Parents should also monitor other media resources for regular updates and instructions.

Other points of information to review:

- **DON'T** come to your child's school during emergency situations. Access to school roads and entrances must remain clear for law enforcement and emergency responders. For you and your child's safety and security, the district will follow reunification protocols when the emergency situation has been brought under control. Please ensure your student's school building has the most up-to-date contact and emergency contact information.
- **AVOID** calling the school or the district offices during the emergency. Please leave our lines open for emergency calls.
- **Stay Close** to the telephone listed on your child's emergency form. When possible, we will provide information via our automated telephone system and other district media resources. Please keep in mind that our first priority is to manage the crisis and provide for the safety and welfare of our students.
- **Encourage** your child to follow the directions of school staff or emergency responders. Remaining in the designated evacuation area until properly discharged to an authorized adult is critical.

- **Refer** to the Emergency Response Information Sheet provided by the NCASD

BEFORE AN EMERGENCY: PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS

- Report any safety issues, concerns or rumors to your school principal, School Resource Officer, or through the Safe2Say Portal. Support security measures when visiting our schools by following visitor management processes when entering the buildings.
- **Regularly update your student's information and emergency contacts in Sapphire.** This information will be used to alert you. In the event of an emergency, only those persons listed will be permitted to pick up students.
- Prepare your student by encouraging him/her to participate in school-based drills and trainings, and discussing the importance of preparedness.

FINDING YOUR CHILD AFTER AN EMERGENCY

Parents will be directed to a specific location called a *Parent Reunification Center*, where they will be required to show a valid photo identification. Students will only be released to authorized individuals. We ask for your help so we can reunite parents and students as safely and quickly as possible.

Student Release Procedure If There is an Emergency:

- **Bring Photo ID with you to the designated location**
- **Park only in areas designated for parents/guardians, walk to the location if possible**
- **Follow the directions of school personnel and cooperate fully with public safety officials**
- **Complete necessary documentation**
- **Only pick up student if authorized**
- **Leave the location as soon as you are reunited with the student(s) released to your custody.**

AFTER EMERGENCY: RECOVERY

Following a school crisis, specially-trained district personnel and community-based professionals are available to provide counseling and outside referrals to students, staff members, and others who may need services.

- Monitor your student's behavior and let the school know if you think counseling or help is needed.
- The district will work as quickly as possible to restore normal operations and will inform parents of changes, if necessary.

Emergency Response Information Sheet

Lockdown (Exterior Threat) - also referred to as Modified Lockdown, is initiated when there may be danger outside of the buildings or off campus. Students and staff are moved (or remain) in classrooms and perimeter doors remain locked to outsiders, including the front office. Classroom instruction continues as normal and necessary movement can take place within the building. Law Enforcement will typically determine when the Lockdown can be lifted.

Lockdown (Interior Threat) - a lockdown is initiated when there may be an immediate threat or hazard in the school building or on the school campus. Perimeter doors will remain locked to outsiders. The office will be closed and phones will not be answered. Students and staff are moved (or remain) in classrooms, and will follow ALICE Training Protocols (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate). Circumstances could require the need to barricade doors and move away from line of sight of windows or doors. Doors and windows are locked and covered. Law Enforcement will typically determine when the Lockdown can be lifted.

EVACUATE - An evacuation is initiated when there are conditions inside the school building that could be unsafe. Students and staff evacuate the building to an outside location and assemble at predetermined locations coordinated by the district. An off-site evacuation may be necessary depending on the incident. School district officials will coordinate bussing of students if necessary. Information on student reunification will be sent out by the district automated phone contact system and other school media resources. PLEASE KEEP EMERGENCY INFORMATION UPDATED WITH THE SCHOOL.

SHELTER IN PLACE - A Shelter in Place is initiated when students and staff need to be inside the building for safety. During Shelter in Place, students and staff are moved (or remain) in their classrooms and normal classroom activities continue until the incident concludes. The front office is unlocked and open for anyone seeking shelter. Shelter in Place is used to provide protection against outdoor environmental conditions such as weather.

REUNIFICATION - Parent-student reunification is a process where parents will be asked to pick up their children from school or an alternate location in a formalized, controlled release. Students will be released only to parents or other adults who are listed as emergency contacts (on emergency forms or in the Sapphire System) and who present a picture ID such as a driver's license, military ID or passport. PLEASE KEEP EMERGENCY INFORMATION UPDATED WITH THE SCHOOL. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we work to ensure that your child remains safe during this process.



NCASD THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAMS

In June of 2019, legislation was enacted to assist schools in creating safer environments. One of the acts, Article XIII-E, Threat Assessment was added to the Pennsylvania School Code.

The law states that each school entity (school district, intermediate unit, area career and technical school, charter school, regional charter school, or cyber charter school) shall establish at least one threat assessment team. In accordance with the legislation, the School Safety and Security Committee (SSSC), Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), and key stakeholders from across Pennsylvania developed model procedures and guidance materials to help local schools establish and operate threat assessment teams. Each school in the New Castle Area School District has its own Threat Assessment Team made up of principals, school counselors, psychologists, teachers, nurses, social workers, and school resource officers.

Once the team receives a report of a potential threat, it is their job to assess and intervene with the student and determine the level of the threat.

If the student's behavior indicates a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others, the team will ensure that the student presenting the threat receives assistance through a range of strategies already established in the school.

To report a threat, please use one of the following methods:

- Contact the building level School Counselors or Administrators
- Call the *Safe2Say Something* hotline at 1-844-SAF2SAY
- Use the Safe2Say Something App to report a threat