

Safety Alert

Allegheny Valley School District

Emergency Management Program 2024-2025

It's All About Safety...

Safety begins in the Allegheny Valley School District with its Emergency Management Program. Efforts to extend and improve safety practices are part of an on-going goal coordinated by a team of District personnel and community emergency management agency representatives. Together, these groups work to improve and provide modifications for the Emergency Management (EM) Plan.

Over the past year, the District has continued to replace security systems in the buildings and upgrade its mental/behavioral health support. District personnel also held various drills in the buildings throughout the school year.

New for the 2024-25 school year include additional changes to safety procedures, implementing an updated access and camera system, and the continuation of staff development classes that follow the guidelines in Act 55. Training for the Safety and Security Coordinator has also occurred. In addition, administrators and School Police Officers continue to implement technology into the Emergency Management program.

Finally, the District continues to expand the EM program, incorporating programs such as threat assessment, Rachel's Challenge, and physical safety upgrades. These focus points allow members of the team to involve students as much as possible. As the District continues to modify the EM Plan, the support of parents and the community remains of upmost importance.

Our Plan...

The Emergency Management program continues to support and prepare the Allegheny Valley School District for crisis situations. The effort is on-going and systematic, to provide for the care and well-being of students and staff. Each year, administrators set goals to move the program forward. For the 2024-2025 school year, the goals include completing physical updates (doors/bollards), additions to the public address, access, and camera systems, and incorporating personal alarms for staff members.

In addition, revisions to the Emergency Management Plan occur on a regular basis, with a complete evaluation completed last year. Administrators direct that all practices outlined in the overall Plan are current. Last year, the District secured PCCD grants that allowed for updated PA systems, improved access systems, new exterior doors, and allowed for the addition of bollards on the grounds of both buildings. This year, the District will purchase and implement a new system of personal alarms for all staff members, making notification of emergency situations more rapid and easily accessible.

Allegheny Valley will also continue its drill exercises, testing procedures in the buildings and Emergency Management Plan. Drills come in many forms, and throughout the school year, allowing staff and students to be able to practice safety protocols, lockdowns, and security procedures. The District also conducts security drills, weather drills, and fire drills on a monthly basis. Recommendations and findings after drills are added to the District's EM Plan to keep it as current as possible. Additional information found through meetings, outside presentations, and evaluations of crisis events are also added to the Plan on a regular basis.

Additional partners for the Emergency Program continue to join the District's safety efforts. Ongoing meetings with partners and local agencies, planning, and research continue to strengthen the plan. The District will continue to work to make the Allegheny Valley environment as safe as possible for students and staff.

Working With Our Community...

The District continues to believe that partnerships are the foundation of its Emergency Management Program. Building on the relationships the District has developed with local, county, and state Emergency Management groups remains a priority.

Allegheny Valley's Emergency Management Committees meet on a regular basis, bringing together local law enforcement, emergency management services, fire departments, and other organizations throughout the four municipalities. These groups work hand-in-hand with the District to carry out, test, and evaluate its plan. Meetings focus on protocols, updates to emergency procedures, and ways to further strengthen partnerships among community responders and the District.



The local ministerium group also meets regularly and trains alongside the administration. This group has provided assistance in crisis events that have taken place. They also coordinate support for families throughout the District. In addition, the School Board's Emergency Management Committee meets monthly, and the District's Core Team meets on a regular basis.

Having these relationships in place before an emergency event occurs is extremely important; maintaining them is vital. Therefore, the District continues to identify organizations that may provide support and asks representatives to attend meetings and participate in drills. Being proactive puts the District one step ahead in any emergency.

The sharing of ideas, information, and resources continues to be invaluable to the District's safety efforts.

What You Should Know...

Drills

Throughout the school year, various drills will be conducted to help train students and staff in emergency procedures and to improve the Emergency Management Plan. Several types of drills may be conducted, including:

Classroom Drills – completed by the individual class, although all classes in the school may participate simultaneously.

Evacuation Drills – practice safe procedures to evacuate a classroom, building, or the entire District.

Lock Down Drills - teach procedures in the event that staff and students need to remain in a building or classroom for safety purposes.

Weather Drills - allow District staff and students to practice responses to a weather emergency in a controlled manner.

Security Drills – mandatory through Act 39, the drill can replace a fire drill within the first 90 days of school and tests various safety practices.

Full Scale Exercises – provide advanced planning where a school-wide drill is conducted with simulated problems such as injuries and damage.

Parents should know that over the course of the school year, staff and students will be involved in a number of drills to prepare them for different types of situations. Fire drills, weather drills, evacuation drills, and other types of drills are all part of the updated Emergency Management Plan.

Communication

Emergency information will be provided to parents as soon as, and as often as, possible. The District will utilize its website, School Messenger, media outlets, and other vehicles whenever necessary.

When situations arise, the District has implemented parent notification levels:

Level 1: Safety Notification is released to clarify rumors or notify parents that an issue has come to the attention of administration;

Level 2: Safety Concern is used when an issue has brought concern to administration and procedures are being initiated for District safety; and

Level 3: Safety Alert is issued when the matter is of a serious nature and extended safety measures need to be implemented.

The District will utilize School Messenger (DYNAmail) and letters to parents to provide information in as timely a manner as possible.

Miscellaneous

- **Know that in the event of a lockdown, NO ONE will be allowed to enter or leave District buildings. Parents are asked NOT to go to the schools, but to wait for information and/or directions from the District.**
- Keep all student emergency information forms up-to-date in your child's building office.
- Notify your child's school with any changes in custody arrangements and bring proper legal documentation to the school when necessary. The school needs to keep this information on file.
- Talk with the building nurse when specific health concerns or special needs arise with your child; this matter includes allergies.
- Notify the school if you notice any unsafe conditions around the facilities and/or building grounds.
- Report any behavior that would constitute a threat to your child, other children, or adults to District administration.
- Contact a building or District administrator or School Police Officer to ask questions or voice concerns about safety matters or procedures in the District.

Resources...

Parents are encouraged to visit the following web sites for resources on school safety:

- **National Alliance for Safe Schools** www.nassleo.org
- **Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency** www.pema.state.pa.us
- **Pennsylvania Department of Education** www.pde.state.pa.us
- **National School Safety Center** www.schoolsafety.us
- **Keep Schools Safe** www.keepschoolssafe.org
- **National Education Association** www.nea.org
- **National Parent Teacher Association** www.pta.org

For Additional Information...

Mr. Gregory Heavner, AVSD Emergency Management Chair
gheavner@avsd.school or 724-274-6500

Ms. Janice Zastawniak, AVSD Emergency Management Co-Chair
jzastawniak@avsd.school or 724-274-5300

Officer Thomas Downing, School Police Officer (SHS)
tdowning@avsd.school 724-274-8100

Officer Joe Naviglia, School Police Officer (Acmetonia)
jnaviglia@avsd.school 724-274-6500

AVSD's Safety Program

The goal of the Allegheny Valley School District is to provide and practice the most current and accurate crisis response information while exhibiting visible leadership in a timely fashion.

Safe2SaySomething

Safe2Say Something (S2SS) provides students and parents with an anonymous reporting system that allows individuals who may be a threat to themselves or others to Say Something in order to prevent an emergency situation.

ALICE

The ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evaluate) program prepares individuals to handle the threat of an armed intruder. ALICE teaches individuals to participate in their own security, while leading others to safety.

Allegheny Valley School District

300 Pearl Avenue, Cheswick, PA 15024
724-274-5300
www.avsdweb.org

Acmetonia Elementary School

300 Pearl Avenue, Cheswick, PA 15024
724-274-6500

Springdale Jr-Sr High School

501 Butler Road, Springdale, PA 15144
724-274-8100





Jan Zastawniak

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