

May 1, 2015

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The Allegheny Valley School District has adopted a new strategy for lockdown procedures known as ALICE. ALICE is an acronym for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evaluate. Prior to the ALICE plan, traditional lockdown procedures were in place, involving the staff locking their doors, moving the students to a secured part of the room, and quietly remaining there until an “all clear” announcement was given. The ALICE plan offers a different philosophy in light of more recent school violence. That philosophy is to use technology and information in a way that staff and students can make informed decisions in a crisis, remove as many people as possible from the danger zone, and provide realistic training so that those involved in a crisis have a better chance of surviving.

The ALICE plan will be implemented at Allegheny Valley schools in phases. A panel of Allegheny Valley staff and community emergency management officials provided input into how these concepts will be communicated to the students. Teachers will provide direction to the students on what action needs to be taken, so it is very important that students listen and follow the instructions given. Classroom teachers will use common guidelines to address the topic and teach their classes the ALICE procedures. Drills will be implemented as the second stage of training for students. In addition, parent training will be a component in the near future so that parents understand the actions being taught to their children.

Drills will include an ALERT from the principal notifying everyone in the building. The area of the building where the student’s classroom is located will determine which direction should be followed. Information will be provided regularly throughout the drills for teachers and students. Therefore, it is very important for students to listen to the directions given by their teachers.

Younger students need constant reminders of safe practices in order for them to make good decisions related to their personal safety. Parents can help prepare their child(ren) for the ALICE plan by helping them understand the following objectives at home:

- There are people of all ages, color, and types that can be mean and may wish students harm.
- Self-confidence comes from trying things that are hard and getting better each time.
- There are many solutions and options when faced with a problem.
- When you are prepared for difficult situations, you can make informed decisions and will have more self-control.
- You are smart and capable when you have knowledge.

In addition:

- Have your child explain the different safety drills and what they mean.
- Help your child name where he/she needs to go in case of evacuation.
- Discuss the importance of following the teacher’s directions without hesitation.

Details surrounding the next phases and additional drills will be communicated at the appropriate time. Feel free to contact your child’s principal with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Gregory J. Heavner
Elementary Supervisor