# WC
## WEST CLERMONT
### SCHOOL DISTRICT

# SAFETY GUIDE

**The safety and well-being of West Clermont students, staff, and community is our top priority. We recognize it is only when students and staff feel safe and are physically and mentally well that they can learn, teach, and reach their fullest potential.**

This guide is intended to highlight our many safety initiatives and inform you, our community, of ways you can help us prioritize the safety of those on our campus each day. Through physical, social-emotional, cyber and crisis response safety efforts, we are ensuring West Clermont Schools continue to be an on the RISE district.

*Union Township K-9 Team*

## PHYSICAL SAFETY

Physical safety refers to the protection of all stakeholders—including students, staff, families and the community—from violence, theft, and exposure to weapons and threats. Physical safety establishes a secure learning environment. Below are tactics we have in place to secure the physical safety of our school community.

- All schools conduct fire, safety and shelter-in-place drills throughout the school year.
- Video cameras are used to monitor activity at all schools.
- All visitors must sign in and wear a visitor badge while on school property.
- All volunteers must pass a criminal background check.
- The middle and high schools have School Resource Officers.
- Staff members at all schools are CPR certified.
- ALICE Training®, an active shooter response training, is reviewed at every school annually.
- Safety Teams at each building meet quarterly.
- All Pre-K-12th grade students have access to the Wolves Wellness Center and all schools have a health clinic.



## SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

Social-emotional health is the ability to understand and manage our emotions and to form social connections and relationships with the world around us. We know that when students and staff are healthy both socially and emotionally, it reduces the chance for other types of safety incidents. That's why at West Clermont we are hyper-focused on making sure every student and staff member feels connected to their peers and available mentors and to the mission of West Clermont. Social-emotional wellness is a key component of each facet of our Portrait of a Graduate. Here are a few ways we support the social-emotional wellness of our students and staff.

Social-emotional curriculum is incorporated at every level:

» The Caring School Community program, a research-based social and emotional learning program, is taught in K-8 classrooms.
» The middle and high schools have a Hope Squad, a peer-to-peer suicide prevention program.
» Where Everyone Belongs (WEB) is offered at West Clermont Middle School to help students transition from fifth to sixth grade.
» Link Crew is available at West Clermont High School to help students transition from eighth to ninth grade.
» Extracurricular opportunities (clubs and/or sports) are provided at every school to engage students in high-interest areas and help them foster relationships.
- Through our partnership with Child Focus, an organization aimed at developing strong families, we have:
  » Incorporated the Signs of Suicide Program at West Clermont Middle School.
  » Made Qualified Mental Health Specialists available to every student in the district.
  » Provided a therapist at the Wolves Wellness Center.

*Chief Paul Broxterman of the Pierce Township Police Department*

*Lieutenant Scott Blakenship of the Union Township Police Department*

*Captain Greg Moran of the Clermont County Sheriff's Office*

## CYBER SAFETY

Technology is an integral part of life in the 21st century. West Clermont Schools have a responsibility to teach students to use technology safely and to protect the district's network from viruses and other cyber threats. We take the following cyber safety precautions:

- Use 24/7 monitoring and content filtering for student devices in the 1:Wolf program while in use on and off-campus.
- Utilize antivirus and antimalware programs to protect staff and student user accounts from being compromised.
- Develop and maintain Cyber Incident Response Plans should an event occur to ensure minimal disruption to teaching and learning.
- Actively participate in the Ohio chapter of the Student Data Privacy Consortium, a collection of school districts focused on student data privacy concerns.

## CRISIS RESPONSE

School crises can include anything from a weather event, power outage, cyber-attack, or pandemic to the death of a staff member or student, or an active shooter situation. West Clermont Schools work with local, state and federal agencies to ensure we are prepared for any event that has the potential to impact the safety of our school community. The district:

- Fosters good relationships with the Clermont County Sheriff's Office, Union Township Police and Fire Departments, Pierce Township Police and Fire Departments, Central Joint Fire-EMS District and Clermont County Emergency Management Agency.
- Routinely participates in tabletop exercises using hypothetical scenarios to plan for a variety of crisis situations.
- Trains staff on the Traumatic Event Crisis Intervention Plan, a school-based framework designed to meet the emotional and psychological needs of students and staff in the aftermath of a traumatic event.
- Maintains up-to-date Emergency Operations Plans that outline what to do in the case of an emergency.

If there is a crisis, our promise to our families is that we will communicate with you as quickly as possible while focusing first on the safety of our students and staff. Here is how you can help us resolve a crisis:

DON'T
- Call the school. Phone lines may be needed for emergency communication.
- Go to the school. This can restrict first responders' ability to access the building, and in some situations, students may be relocated to another place.
- Share information you don't know to be true on social media. It is critical that we focus on the safety issue at hand without fighting misinformation.

DO
- Make sure your contact information is up to date in the [PowerSchool Parent Portal](#). We will use this information to communicate updates via text, phone, and/or email as often as possible.

## CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Our work in the area of safety and well-being is never complete. Students thrive in schools and districts that focus on continuous improvement and the coordination of policy, processes, and practices that address the holistic needs of every student. We believe we have a solid foundation of school safety but more work is necessary to continue to keep our schools as safe as possible. Here are some of the ways we are working to improve our efforts:

- Routinely seek additional funding through grants. Most recently, we were able to use ESSER (COVID-19 relief) funding to hire additional staff to assist with the social-emotional needs of our students and families.
- Hired an outside consultant to conduct a safety audit.
- Survey community members and gather feedback through events like our Town Hall meetings.
- The Citizens Advisory Commission is partnering with our safety team to conduct a study and make recommendations on their findings.

## RESOURCES

*Safer Ohio School Tip Line*
Call 844-723-3764 to anonymously report information to school officials and law enforcement about threats to student safety. The tip line can be used for:

- Bullying and cyberbullying incidents
- Self-harm or suicidal behaviors
- Verbal or written threats observed toward students, staff or the school itself
- Weapons/suspicious devices on or near school grounds
- Gang-related activity
- Illegal drug use

If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health crisis, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 988.



*Representatives from Pierce Township, Union Township, and Clermont County Sheriff's Office meet with WC District Office personnel for safety debriefing of the 2021-22 School Year.*

## WEST CLERMONT SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS



*Officer Steve Siekbert*
*Union Township Police*

*Officer Tony Metzger*
*Union Township Police*

*Officer Mike Ventre*
*Union Township Police*

*Deputy Eric Gregory*
*Clermont County Sheriff's Office*

## HOW TO TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT SCHOOL SAFETY

According to the American Psychological Association, parents/caregivers are the single most influential people in a child's life when it comes to making them feel safe and equipping them with the resources and skills they need to be successful as adults.

Here are some ways you can ensure your child stays safe at school and wherever they go.

1. **See Something Say Something.** Teach your child to say something to a trusted adult anytime they see something out of the ordinary or feel as if something is off.

2. **Make time to talk.** Asking your child about their day reinforces that you care and encourages them to share information openly and honestly.

3. **Reassure them.** Reassure your child that schools and other social settings are safe.

4. **Review safety procedures.** This will look different depending on the age of your child. For example, in early elementary school, this may include teaching them to look both ways before they cross the street and helping them to memorize their phone number and/or address, while in high school, it may involve reminding them not to text while driving and not to talk to people they don't know on social media.

We all play a part in keeping our schools and community safe. Thank you for your support of your child and the entire West Clermont School District.

**SCHOOL CLOSURE** - When schools are temporarily closed due to inclement weather, loss of utilities, or another unexpected event. *Communication Plan: We will communicate as soon as possible through school messenger. Our goal is to make a decision no later than 5 AM each day.*

**EVACUATION** - When staff and students are asked to leave the building due to safety concerns. If it is believed the evacuation is temporary, staff and students will stay on-site. If the safety concern is believed to be a prolonged event, staff and students may be relocated to an off-site location. *Communication Plan: We will communicate as soon as the building has been evacuated and students/staff are deemed safe.*

**REUNIFICATION** - Takes place when staff and students have been relocated to an off-site location after an evacuation and families are required to pick up their student(s). *Communication Plan: We will update as often as necessary and provide logistical information.*

**ALARM DROP** - When an alarm goes off but there is no immediate threat to those in the building. *Communication Plan: We will email if necessary.*

**DRILL** - Mandated safety exercises that include evacuation, fire, tornado and lockdown drills. *Communication Plan: We will email either before or after the drill.*

**LOCKDOWN** - When an emergency affecting the school prevents the safe evacuation of a building, staff and students are put on lockdown or kept inside the building and/or their classroom. *Communication Plan: We will communicate as soon as possible and will follow up when the lockdown has cleared with more detailed information.*

- **Level 1** – The building will be secured: No outside admittance to the building; students may move freely within the building.

- **Level 2** – Non-emergency Lockdown: Students are secured in classrooms with no movement in hallways; students may continue class in their secured classroom.
- **Level 3** – Emergency Lockdown: Activate all ALICE* protocols; no movement within the classroom. Protocols include:

**Alert** is your first notification of danger and move to lockdown.

**Lockdown** - Barricade the room. Prepare to EVACUATE or COUNTER if needed.

**Inform** - Communicate the violent intruder's location and direction in real time.

**Counter** - Create Noise, Movement, Distance and Distraction with the intent of reducing the shooter's ability to shoot accurately. Counter is NOT fighting.

**Evacuate** - When safe to do so, remove yourself from the danger zone.

*Definitions taken from ALICE: Navigate 360*

**TRANSIENT THREAT** - There is no sustained intent to harm. *Communication Plan: We may communicate based on circumstances.*

**SUBSTANTIVE THREAT** - The intent is present (or not clear) and therefore requires protective action. *Communication Plan: We will communicate.*

**Please note:**

Each situation has its own set of challenges that may change when and how we communicate with families. Our goal remains to communicate with you as often and transparently as possible. Thank you for your patience and understanding in the event of a safety situation.