



ALLEN PARK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

an uncompromising commitment to excellence

Riley Education Center

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Michael H. Darga
Superintendent of Schools

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Dear APPS Families,

Over the past several years we have seen a dramatic increase in school violence and school shootings. In fact, in the past 12 years, there have been 186 school shootings reported. As the experts analyze these horrific events it is apparent that we need to do more, not only taking steps in an attempt to prevent the event from occurring but training staff and students on procedures that we all need to survive an active shooter in our schools.

If you look at what has occurred in our schools and colleges throughout the country it is evident that if an armed intruder wants to get into any school building, there is a good chance that they probably will succeed. The fact is, even though the Allen Park Public School District has taken great steps in the matter of securing our school buildings, i.e. locking doors, installing monitored entry systems, and installing additional cameras throughout our school buildings, one question still needs to be answered. What if?

In the past, schools across the country have answered that question with a method we call Lockdown. That system is designed that in the event an unauthorized person enters the school buildings or grounds, a Lockdown alert is given and students and staff are instructed to lock their classrooms with lights out and to hide in a far corner of the classroom, while remaining calm and quiet. This is probably the procedure that you as parents followed some years ago. However does this answer our question? History has shown that Lockdown is a tool that we all should use, but is it the only tool that we should be using? The answer to that can be found by the number of students that have been killed or seriously wounded during school shootings, students that were shot and killed hiding under a desk or huddled up in a corner of a classroom, library or cafeteria. Can we expect a fully armed person that enters our school buildings with the intent to do harm to our children to simply leave when they find that the classroom door is locked? Knowing what we know about active shooters in school buildings and other public places, the answer is NO. They have already made the decision to kill when they armed themselves and entered that building.

Another known fact is that in almost all of the shootings that occur in schools, the shooter usually creates as much carnage as they can in a short period of time and then kill themselves before police even arrive. So, how do we give our students and staff a greater chance of surviving an active shooter? We give them more tools.

Today, while students were dismissed for a half day of school, all district staff were introduced to a new procedure that school administrators, the AP Police Department, as well as experts across the country, believe will increase the chance of survival during an active shooter incident. We will begin implementing this new procedure by teaching and training our staff, and later secondary students, to the A.L.I.C.E. system. What does it mean?

Alert Get the word out! Armed Intruder in the building instead of the use of any codes. Use clear, concise language to convey the type and specific location of the event. This summer, we have enhanced our technology in that every phone in the district can become a public announcement means of communication.

Lockdown Good starting point. We will continue to Lockdown students in secure areas.

Allen Park Board of Education

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Inform	Continuation of the use of clear, concise language to convey the type and specific location of the event. Communication keeps the Shooter off balance and allows for good decision-making.
Counter	Apply Skills to Distract, Confuse and gain Control. (This is a last resort measure, used only if evacuation was not possible)
Evacuate	Reduce the number of Potential Targets for the shooter, and reduce chances of victims resulting from friendly fire when help arrives.

The philosophy of A.L.I.C.E. is to use technology and information in a way so 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 have a better chance of surviving.

In short, using the above A.L.I.C.E. method we will teach our staff, and later students, multiple tools to use in order to evade an armed intruder/active shooter/killer who enters our school, including:

1. Listen carefully to the location and type of event.
2. Get to and/or remain in a secure area until it is safe to evacuate.
3. Should an armed intruder/active shooter invade their area, apply skills to Distract, Confuse and Gain Control. **(Counter methods are last resort measures)**
4. As soon as it is safe to do so, Evacuate.

Please understand, in **NO WAY** are we asking our staff or students to make any attempt to subdue an armed gunman outside of their secure area. However, we will provide staff and **secondary students** with the knowledge that if faced with a life or death situation there are methods that can be applied to greatly enhance their chance of survival. The methods that will be taught to students at APMS, APHS and APCS in the event an armed gunman directly confronts them are:

- Cause distractions to interfere with the ability to shoot accurately
- Cause as much chaos in the room as possible to create sensory overload
- Do not be a stationary target
- How to control the attacker using body weight, not strength (not for younger children)
- How to interact with responding Law Enforcement

Younger students need constant reminders of safe practices (much like you may already do for ‘stranger danger’) in order for them to make good decisions related to their personal safety. While younger students will not be introduced to counter methods, teachers and principals may create drills to gauge ‘how quickly’ students can exit a building with a destination in mind. **Parents will receive ongoing communications from building principals as A.L.I.C.E. training unfolds. Please watch for an informational parent meeting coming your way soon.** Our goal with A.L.I.C.E. training, and with all of our security measures, is to assure, as much as possible, the safety of every child and every adult in our school buildings.

In closing, training will emphasize that the best way to survive an active shooter is to escape. When that is not possible, being mentally prepared and having been given the authority and ability to act will save lives. Please contact the principal at your child’s school with any questions or concerns. You may also contact me directly. APPS will continue to put your child’s safety as our top priority.

Sincerely,



Michael H. Darga
Superintendent of Schools