



June 7, 2019

Dear Thornton Fractional 215 Parents and Family,

As part of our ongoing efforts to ensure the safety of all staff and students, Thornton Fractional District 215 would like to announce the adoption of a new safety protocol called ALICE. In the event an armed intruder enters one of our school buildings, the ALICE protocol will allow staff and students the opportunity to lockdown, counter, or evacuate based on several factors rather than remain locked in their current location.

Below are answers to questions parents and guardians frequently ask about ALICE:

Q: What is ALICE and ALICE training?

A: ALICE is a federally endorsed safety protocol.

The letters ALICE stand for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter and Evacuate:

- **Alert** – Inform people of the threat, giving as much information as possible.
- **Lockdown** – If staff and students determine it is not safe to evacuate, they can choose to lockdown and barricade the room that they are in.
- **Inform** – Pass on as much information as possible to others and to First Responders, including calling 911.
- **Counter** – An effort of last resort, if an armed intruder is able to get into the space they are in, individuals can counter with distraction or other tactics. Staff are being trained to use every effort to stop the intruder, instead of relying on the traditional lockdown and hide response.
- **Evacuate** – If it is safe to do so, all are encouraged to evacuate the building, and remove themselves from the threat.

During ALICE training, staff and students are trained in different options for responding to a school intruder who is intent on doing harm. In certain circumstances, the “lock the door and hide” strategy might be appropriate. In some cases, the staff member(s) and students might take precautions to barricade the entrance(s) of the classroom. Under certain conditions, it might be the best decision for the staff and students to flee the building. The goal of ALICE training is that the strategies learned will increase the chances that our staff and students might survive if a terrible circumstance of an armed intruder ever were to occur.

Q. Why is the ALICE protocol important?

A. In a crisis, law enforcement is on their way as quickly as possible, but we must learn to help ourselves before they arrive. Just as the fire department equips us with fire extinguishers and sprinkler systems, and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) trains us in using an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) for heart attacks, the law enforcement community is training us in our response options to be used before they are able to arrive in an active intruder situation.

Q: Why change to these different protocols?

A: We believe that all of our Thornton Fractional 215 schools are the safest place for our students to be. Just like practicing what we should do in a fire with our monthly fire drills, we want to be sure that we will know what to do if an armed intruder is in a school. All our schools are equipped with a number of safeguards, some seen and others unseen, to keep our students safe. In addition, because we know that violence has become all too frequent in our world, the strategies and mental preparation we use in ALICE preparation are transferable to any public venue our students may find themselves in where a crisis may occur.

We have to come to the realization that a violent intruder event can happen any time, any place and for any reason. There is a new standard-of-care, which emphasizes the need for pro-active, options-based, strategies. The federal government recommendations as well as major law enforcement associations support these strategies. ALICE Training is the model upon which these official recommendations were built.

Q. How will my child learn about the ALICE protocol?

A. All students will participate in presentations on ALICE as well as engage in scenario(s) where they can apply ALICE strategies. As required by Illinois School Code, each building will engage students in an active shooter drill twice a year where students will apply what they have learned.

Q: How will parents be notified if their child's school is experiencing a crisis?

A: Notification will be sent out using all methods of school district communication, including an email and phone call from student information system, website updates, media alerts, and any other communication mode we have at our disposal. We encourage you to review your contact information to ensure your email and phone number information are correct.

Q: How will we know my child will be safe after the emergency?

A: In the event of a full evacuation, students will report to a predesignated evacuation site located off school grounds and away from danger. Parents will be informed about these locations through direct communication and provided instructions on how to locate their child.

Q: Will the local police municipalities be in schools to help teachers practice scenarios and possibilities for an active shooter situation?

A: Yes, the Lansing, Lynwood, and Calumet City Police Departments have trained staff in the ALICE Protocol; we anticipate their assistance too.

Q: Where can I go for more information about ALICE?

A: Here is a link to information about ALICE. We will also be adding information to the district website <http://www.alicetraining.com/>. Contact your schools' Assistant Principal of Building Control with specific questions. Additionally, each school will conduct an ALICE parent awareness meeting in partnership with local law enforcement.

It is paramount that we put as many safeguard measures in place to create a safe and welcoming learning environment; ALICE is one additional safeguard measure. Again, if you should have any questions about ALICE, do not hesitate to contact your child's Assistant Principal of Building Control.

At your service,



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