



MERCER COUNTY SCHOOLS

"Great Kids Achieving Great Things"

Dear Parents and Guardians;

During the month of January, all Mercer County Schools will be reviewing and practicing our emergency drills as required by Kentucky law. These drills include our response for the following emergencies: severe weather, fire, earthquake, intruder in the building (lockdown), and chemical spills. Practicing our response prior to an actual emergency allows us to prepare children and staff on how to respond safely, answer any of their questions, and address their concerns. When we have these drills, we ask our local emergency responders to participate with us and provide us with suggestions on how to improve.

Earlier this week we met with Sheriff Kelty, who had recently participated in a training with the Marshall County Emergency Responders. Officer Kelty repeatedly told us, "The children of Mercer County are the number 1 priority of the Sheriff's Office. If an actual emergency was to occur at any of our schools, the emergency responders need the roads around the school to be clear so they can respond quickly. Minutes save lives." Many of our staff are also parents of children attending school in another building. We realize that a parent/guardian's first instinct is to call or text your child to make sure they are safe. Then the next response is to want to go get them and take them home. Sherriff Kelty shared with us that in Marshall Co., the phone lines were overwhelmed for a period and the emergency responders were unable to call dispatch. He asked us to remind parents to keep the phone line opened and of our protocol for reunifying following an emergency.

SCHOOL RELOCATION AND STUDENT/PARENT REUNIFICATION

We will notify you as soon as possible if your child is evacuated from school. We have pre-determined sites chosen in the event an evacuation becomes necessary. The decision to evacuate and relocate will be made on a case-by-case basis depending upon the severity of the situation and evaluations by Law Officials, the Emergency Management Agency, and the Superintendent. The district will utilize the OneCall Now messaging system and the Mercer County School webpage. Harrodsburg Dispatch will communicate information using the Code Red messaging system.

PARENTS-WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Before an Emergency occurs:

- Provide the school with your current phone number. If this number changes during the school year, provide the school with your updated information immediately.
- Add additional numbers to the OneCall system by going to www.mercer.kyschools.us and to OneCall Now tab.
- Keep your child's enrollment card up-to-date at the school.
- Sign up for the Code Red Emergency messages from the Harrodsburg Dispatch at:

<https://public.coderedweb.com/CNE/en-US/BFB7CC4C6C0A>

During an Emergency:

- If you are notified of an emergency at your child's school, please **DO NOT GO TO THE SCHOOL** or approach the campus as this will hinder emergency responders and emergency vehicles from getting to campus.
- **Do not call the school or your child.** This could tie up phone lines that are needed to call law officials, emergency management, and other official personnel. If students are hiding, a ringing or vibrating phone may make your child and others with them targets.

During Reunification:

- Know that you will be able to pick up your child at the designated relocation site.
- Bring your driver's licenses with you for identification.

Thank you for your help. If you have questions, please contact us at 859-733-7000.

Sincerely,


Dennis Davis, Superintendent


Esther Hayslett, Safe Schools