

# COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES for PRINCIPALS

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## ABOUT

*PRinciples for Principals offers key information and messages for principals to consider in communicating the basics and getting parents involved. It is written and published by the DoDEA Communications Office.*

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## FORCE PROTECTION, SAFETY, AND SECURITY: TALKING POINTS FOR PRINCIPALS

**T**oday we live in a very uncertain world. The safety, security and well-being of our children and our school communities around the world are our top priority. Our DoD School leaders and employees have an obligation to be vigilant about the ever-present danger of terrorism.

It is incumbent upon all of us to be attentive to and comply with advisories from local commanders regarding force protection and security measures and policies. We must do our part as well. It is critical that we are proactive in our approach. Many of our practices and procedures have been institutionalized over time to create safe and secure environments. Principals should be able to outline these for any customers or employees who may raise concerns.

In times of heightened alert or emergency situations, local commanders, staff, parents, and students may turn to principals for guidance and assurance. By displaying knowledge of security procedures and conveying that information to a wide audience, the principal sets a tone of confidence in our ability to provide a safe and secure learning and working environment.

*This tip sheet offers some bullets and talking points for principals to consider when addressing safety and security issues with staff, students, parents, and commands. A principal's knowledge of the measures in place and commitment to the security of our people and property helps build confidence among those we serve.*

## OUR GOAL

Providing students and staff with a safe and secure learning and working environment.

## WHEN TRAVEL ADVISORIES ARE ISSUED OR THE FPCON CHANGES:

- ◆ The safety, security and well-being of our children and our school communities around the world are our top priorities.
- ◆ Students and staff who are identified as Americans are always potentially at risk.
- ◆ DoDEA schools are attentive to and comply with advisories from local commanders regarding force protection and security measures and policies.
- ◆ We cooperate fully with Commanders around the world as they continually assess the security environment.
- ◆ Our District Safety and Security Officers routinely coordinate with school, bus transportation, and command officials to review anti-terrorism procedures and measures and ensure that school employees, students and parents are aware of emergency plans and what to do if a crisis occurs.
- ◆ Awareness of the environment and proper responses to emergencies go a long way toward keeping our communities safe.
- ◆ As always in times of heightened alert, parents and school staff should stay tuned to command information channels, AFN, and local media for current information about force protection.
- ◆ Commands around the globe, in cooperation with the host nation and local officials are, as always, taking all the necessary steps to continually ensure the security of families and facilities.
- ◆ We support and appreciate the efforts of Commanders across the globe to provide every precaution to ensure the security of our students, employees, and schools. We must do our part as well.
- ◆ Stay alert. Suspicious activities are to be reported to law enforcement officials.
- ◆ School emergency plans are exercised annually in coordination with host installation. In addition, drills are conducted several times throughout the year. This insures staff and students are familiar with their roles and responsibilities in emergency situations.

**THE SAFETY, SECURITY AND WELL-BEING OF OUR CHILDREN AND OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITIES AROUND THE WORLD ARE OUR TOP PRIORITY. OUR DOD SCHOOL LEADERS AND EMPLOYEES HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO BE VIGILANT ABOUT THE EVER-PRESENT DANGER OF TERRORISM.**

**A PRINCIPALS KNOWLEDGE OF THE MEASURES IN PLACE AND COMMITMENT TO THE SECURITY OF OUR PEOPLE AND PROPERTY HELPS BUILD CONFIDENCE AMONG THOSE WE SERVE.**

*DODEA SCHOOLS ARE ATTENTIVE TO AND COMPLY WITH ADVISORIES FROM LOCAL COMMANDERS REGARDING FORCE PROTECTION AND SECURITY MEASURES AND POLICIES. WE COOPERATE FULLY WITH COMMANDERS AROUND THE WORLD AS THEY CONTINUALLY ASSESS THE SECURITY ENVIRONMENT.*

## CURRENT CONTACT INFORMATION IS CRITICAL

- ◆ It is critical that the school has current contact information (telephone, cell phone, address, and email) for parents/sponsors as well as an emergency contact in the event that we can't reach a parent/sponsor.
- ◆ During your regular visits to school, check with the office to make sure your information is up to date.
- ◆ Students should always know their address, home phone number, bus, and bus stop.

## SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION

### School Bus Office Personnel

- ◆ Stay abreast of changes in security awareness and keep contractors and school officials informed.
- ◆ Maintain two-way communication with buses when they are transporting students.
- ◆ Work with installation security personnel regarding route planning, installation access, parking of buses, etc.

### Bus Drivers

- ◆ Have received training in security, safety, and communications. This training is an annual requirement.
- ◆ Have been screened by base/post authorities and/or host nation law enforcement through police background checks.
- ◆ Have been briefed about heightened security awareness to include the observation of suspicious activity in/around bus stops, vehicles following buses etc.
- ◆ Understand safety procedures to be used in the event of an incident/accident.
- ◆ Conduct 100% daily inspections (before, during, and after runs) of buses for suspicious packages, tampering, and normal safety related (maintenance) items.
- ◆ Trained in emergency evacuation procedures.
- ◆ Can communicate with base station & school bus office by cellular phone immediately if suspicious activity occurs.

## EDUCATION PROGRAM

- ◆ Teachers provide ongoing reminders for all students regarding personal safety and antiterrorism

appropriate to age and grade.

- ◆ DoDEA's Antiterrorism Awareness Training program, tailored to primary and secondary students, is available at: <http://www.dodea.edu/Offices/Safety/antiterrorism.cfm>
- ◆ Emergency evacuation drills are conducted for all grades.
- ◆ All field trips are coordinated with the local Commander to ensure that security issues have been addressed, and emergency procedures are in place.
- ◆ School employees receive ongoing instruction in emergency evacuation and lockdown procedures.
- ◆ Principals coordinate closely with local Commanders regarding continuing appropriate levels of Force Protection for school children, staff, and facilities.
- ◆ All students, school personnel, and visitors are reminded to report suspicious activity and, "If you see something, say something."

**IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT EVERY DODEA EMPLOYEE, STUDENT, AND VISITOR BE AWARE OF THEIR SURROUNDINGS AT SCHOOL AND SCHOOL EVENTS AND REPORT ALL SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY TO THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES; REPORT CRIMINAL AND SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY TO LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES AND TO DODEA CHAIN OF COMMAND.**

## HOW CAN A PARENT ENHANCE CHILD SAFETY BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL?

- ✓ Ensure that your child has a bus pass in his/her possession at all times. Bus drivers are required to check for passes daily.
- ✓ Accompany students to and from bus stops.
- ✓ Review safety, conduct and consequences with children.
- ✓ Discuss public decorum with children so they won't call attention to themselves at bus stops.
- ✓ In times of heightened security, avoid dressing children in clothing that singles them out as a military family member from one of our schools (letter jackets, sweatshirts).
- ✓ In times of heightened security, JROTC uniforms should not be worn off post. Instructors will make other arrangements for cadets to dress at school on uniform days.
- ✓ Report suspicious activity at bus stops to installation/school bus transportation authorities.
- ✓ Report safety violations by students or adults.
- ✓ Be aware of your child's activities on the internet and on social media. Ask questions about who they are interacting with on these sites. Help them to understand the benefits and dangers of using the internet.

## BUILDING SECURITY

- ◆ One of the many security initiatives we continue to pursue is limiting access to schools and campuses.
- ◆ Where possible, entry is limited to a single point.

- ◆ All visitors must check-in at the office to receive a visitor's pass.
- ◆ Local Commanders provide continuing security and surveillance of school facilities as appropriate.
- ◆ One of the many improvements we continue to make to schools is the upgrading of security fencing and exterior lighting.
- ◆ It is imperative that every DoDEA employee, student, and visitor be aware of their surroundings at school and school events and report all suspicious activity to the appropriate authorities; report criminal and suspicious activity to local law enforcement authorities and to DoDEA chain of command.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

- ◆ Each school maintains effective relationships with local and installation law enforcement.
- ◆ In addition, we receive strong security support from the command/ military police for school events which occur after school hours and/or on weekends.

*IT IS CRITICAL THAT THE SCHOOL HAS CURRENT CONTACT INFORMATION (TELEPHONE, CELL PHONE, ADDRESS, AND EMAIL) FOR PARENTS/SPONSORS AS WELL AS AN EMERGENCY CONTACT IN THE EVENT THAT WE CAN'T REACH A PARENT/SPONSOR.*

## CRISIS ACTION PLAN

- ◆ Each of DoDEA's 181 schools maintains an emergency response and evacuation plan. Within this plan are guidelines for handling everything from earthquakes and fires to civil disturbances, including the circumstances and manner under which a school would experience a complete internal lockdown.
- ◆ These plans are updated annually, exercised frequently, and coordinated with the local command.
- ◆ We have a team of mental health professionals ready to deploy to a site should there be a need.
- ◆ Schools are a major player in creating safe and secure environments and are ready to collaborate with communities to help in any way.

## FAMILY SUPPORT IN TIMES OF DEPLOYMENTS

### Principals and Staff will:

- ✓ Remain focused on the business of learning and teaching.
- ✓ Follow guidance provided in the Crisis Management Guide.
- ✓ Establish communication protocols that maintain consistent and uniform communication to the community regarding the crisis
- ✓ Provide students and staff with access to school counselors, school psychologists, and community



## Communications Weekly Report

*Please let us know  
what's happening  
at your school.  
It's the best way to  
make sure leaders  
have an awareness  
and appreciation  
of what you do  
every day for  
our students.*

mental health professionals,

- ✓ Establish connections with Family Assistance/Support Center.
- ✓ Coordinate Counseling and Crisis Management Support to address the physical and emotional welfare of individuals affected.
- ✓ Coordinate with Rear Detachment Commanders.
- ✓ Encourage and facilitate communication between deployed members and students.
- ✓ Provide facilities when feasible to support Family Assistance Centers.
- ✓ Maintain a stable environment by lessening the impact of trauma and accelerating recovery.

## PERSONAL SAFETY FOR OUR EMPLOYEES

- ✓ Review AT Level I training at <https://jkodirect.jten.mil>.
- ✓ Educate family members on basic personal security measures.
- ✓ Review your local emergency response procedures, i.e. evacuation, lockdown, shelter-in-place, and take cover.
- ✓ Review privacy settings on social media pages. Limit who can view your social media sites, but do not trust these settings as absolute and never allow applications to geolocate your location.
- ✓ Limit any reference, current or former, to military or government employment on social media. Think before you post. Always assume everyone in the world will be able to see what you are posting or tweeting, even if the site limits your posts to your friends and family.

## POINTS OF CONTACT: (Personalize list with local points of contact)

School Bus Transportation (Phone and cell)  
School:  
Commander:  
Military Police:  
School Liaison Officer (SLO):  
District Superintendent: