

Communication PRinciples for Principals

MARCH 2011

DODEA SCHOOL SECURITY



IDEA

- Awareness of the environment and proper responses to emergencies go a long way toward keeping our communities safe.

FORCE PROTECTION, SAFETY, AND SECURITY TALKING POINTS FOR PRINCIPALS

Today we live in a very uncertain world. The safety, security and well-being of our children and our school communities around the world is 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.

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



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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.

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TIPS



SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION

SCHOOL BUS OFFICE PERSONNEL

- » Stay abreast of changes in security awareness and keep contractors and school officials informed.
- » Maintain 100% 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 recently updated its Antiterrorism Awareness Training program tailored to primary and secondary students that is being implemented around the globe.
- » 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.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH PARENTS

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 economy 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. Cadets will be expected to dress at school on uniform days.
- » Report suspicious activity at bus stops to base/school bus transportation

authorities.

- » Report safety violations by students or adults.

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.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

- » Each school maintains effective relationships with local military police agencies. Many elementary or middle schools have a military police officer (DARE Instructor) on staff augmenting the staff and working in the buildings. Their presence helps serves as a deterrent to anyone considering doing harm to others.
- » In addition, we receive strong security support from the command/military police for school events which occur after school hours and/or on weekends.

CRISIS ACTION PLAN

- » Each of DoDEA's 194 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 psychologists 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

Principals and Staff will:

- » Remain focused on the business of learning and teaching.
- » Establish connections with Family Assistance/Support Center.
- » Coordinate Counseling and Crisis Management Support.
- » Coordinate with Rear Detachment Commanders.

- » Encourage and facilitate communication between deployed members and children in schools.
- » Provide facilities when feasible to support Family Assistance Centers.
- » Maintain a stable environment.

OUR GOAL

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

POINTS OF CONTACT: (INSERT LOCAL POCs)

School Bus Transportation (Phone and cell)
School
Commander
SLO
DSO