

School Safety & Security

Our belief in student and school safety and security is found in the mission statement: **Teton School District 401 Provides a Safe and Exceptional Learning Environment where Career and College Readiness are the Academic Cornerstones of a Relevant and Progressive Education.** The district is committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students, staff, and visitors. This belief is focused on meeting students' physical, mental and emotional, social and safety needs, to create a school culture that is safe, welcoming and nurtures positive relationships to guide student achievement.

Safety Goals

1. Suicide Prevention (training for staff, coaches, resources for parents, peer-mentoring (state Sources of Strength grant/training/support), need is ongoing).
2. Bullying-Cyberbullying-Harassment prevention, Digital Citizenship support, training, resources (Training for staff, resources for students & parents).
3. Safe Routes to school (pathways, sidewalks, crossing flags, updated signage), continue to address access areas (sidewalks between schools, paving bus loading areas, lighting on pathways).
4. Positive student relationships (peers, staff, community members), PBIS (Respect, Responsible, Ready), staff expectations, support, and student accountability.
5. Safe entryways to schools (review security access at all entrances to schools: enhanced video monitoring systems, buzzer systems, remodel entry way to direct all entrance traffic through the main office, or other feasible options).
6. Collaboration with safety officials: Teton County Sheriff's Department, Teton County Fire & Rescue Department, Teton County Emergency Management, Eastern Idaho District 7 Public Health Department, American Red Cross, Teton Valley Hospital and Ambulance Services, State of Idaho Division of Building Safety with annual safety inspections of all schools and facilities, to ensure our schools are safe, secure and well prepared if an emergency occurs.
7. School Resource Officer (SRO): continue to research funding and staffing options with the school district and Teton County Sheriff's Department to restore this position.
8. Enhance internal communication systems and assignments: update and install PA systems in elementary schools, develop redundant communication systems and chain-of-command delegation (multiple ways to communicate and alternative leadership assignments are used).
9. The Emergency Operations Plan covers a wide variety of situations to help staff as well as our public safety and community partners respond swiftly should a crisis occur in our schools. In the event of a school emergency, communication from the school district to parents and the community will happen in various ways.

Emergency Notification systems:

- Tune into the local television and radio stations for news alerts (Local News 8 TV, Q102 radio)
- **Check your e-mail** or cell phone if you are subscribed to **Text Wire (text messaging: txtwire.com)**. **Parents and Staff will be notified directly through Infinite Campus, Messenger.**
- **Teton County Idaho uses the Code Red reverse 911 system, this may be utilized when needed (to subscribe, go to: www.tetoncountysheriff.com, select the Code Red icon**
- **[Visit the website for Teton School District 401 homepage \(tsd401.org\)](http://www.tsd401.org)**
- **[Check the district Facebook page \(Teton School District 401\)](#)**

The information included on this page provides an overview of the many **safety measures** that Teton School District 401 has implemented and that can serve as a guide for parents, students, and staff should there be a school emergency or if schools are closed/cancelled due to inclement weather. Please report any safety concerns you may have to your school principal, or complete the anonymous tips survey posted on the district homepage

Safety Measures in Our Schools

Students and families – take comfort in knowing that the safety measures in place through TSD401 are extensive. The District has a Safety Committee that includes administration, teachers, parents and local safety officials. The committee works diligently to ensure that the system-wide emergency plan is current and that all staff members are prepared to respond to a wide variety of school emergencies. In addition, each of our schools have school-specific safety procedures in place to provide a safe learning environment for our students.

The following are "District" level initiatives. If you have questions or comments about procedures specific to your school, please contact the building principal at your school.

- **Law enforcement support of schools** (monitoring school zones throughout the school day)
- **Deputy Drop-ins** - Due to heightened awareness around our nation regarding school safety, our local law enforcement provides drop-in visits by other uniformed officers during the school day as much as possible.
- **Canine Detection** – At various times during the school year, schools will be randomly selected for a canine detection team, to sweep the school and outside areas, including parking lots, to detect any illegal drugs, medication, gunpowder, firearms and alcohol. These visits support our schools to conduct searches of school lockers, vehicles, and common areas.
- **Video security camera systems** – video security camera systems have been in place in all schools, and school property, for many years. These systems help deter unsafe activity while monitoring and providing video evidence when needed in various situations. Cameras are installed in the open areas of the schools, such as: entrances, hallways, and gymnasium, cafeteria, parking lots, and library, computer labs (they are not installed in the locker rooms or restroom areas).
- **School Bus safety**: specific policies, procedures and rules are in place for all school buses in the school district. Bus drivers are required to meet training and safety procedure protocols each school year, including practicing evacuation drills with students on each bus route. State safety inspections are completed every school year, where maintenance reports, on-site observations,

bus driver reviews and mechanic inspections are documented and shared with supervisors and administration.

- **For emergencies and immediate safety concerns, call 911.**

Emergency Procedures:

- **Safety Drills** - We have emergency procedures for every building, including specific procedures for intruders in the building. With support and guidance from the Sheriff's department we practice these procedures throughout the school year. School administration conducts teacher training regarding emergency procedures. Printed copies of the emergency procedures are kept in every classroom and they are reviewed and updated frequently by the District Safety Committee. These safety drills include **fire-drills, lock-downs, evacuations** and earthquake drills. Specific details about evacuation sites and school safety procedures are sent home with each student at the beginning of the school year.
- **Safety exercises**: "Safety exercises" are conducted with our staff and community partners to plan for emergency contingencies that require a response by first responders. For example, we may have conducted safety exercises at an elementary school with an earthquake scenario, the middle school with a crashed airplane, and the high school for an active-shooter scenario. Local law enforcement and other emergency services personnel participate with our school staff in these important safety exercises. The Teton County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), serves as a partner with the school district in these exercises.
- **Safety Committee** - We have an established District Safety Committee. The purpose of the committee is to review our processes and procedures and recommend changes. The committee is comprised of school administration, local law enforcement, and county emergency response personnel. The committee makes recommendations based on current research related to school safety and emergency procedures. (The committee consults with both local and national experts regarding school safety.) All concerns regarding school safety procedures, from school staff, parents, or members of the community, are routed to this committee for discussion and possible recommended changes. The safety committee also addresses immediate versus future needs, costs of upgrading based on perceived needs in security, and balancing the atmosphere of a welcoming school versus more of a closed, locked down environment. This work is ongoing and strives to learn from research and best practices in Idaho and nationally.
- **Safety Reviews** - Safety reviews have been conducted for every school building. A safety review is a process that examines issues such as: school access, environmental hazards and communication systems. This is done locally and with state and regional officials. Each school is inspected annually by the Idaho Division of Building Safety.
- **Crisis Response Team** - Our team works to provide calm, well thought out responses to crisis situations that affect District students and staff. Comprised of district counselors, school psychologists, administrators and other trained staff members, the team receives professional development to be able to provide quality, research-based support during tragic events. What constitutes a crisis? There isn't one definition that fits all crisis situations. A crisis could be any of the following and more: the death of a student, the death of a staff member, the death of a community person who had contact with students and/or staff, a catastrophe of nature such as a severe storm etc. that has affected students and/or staff, a local, state, regional, national, or world-wide situation that causes alarm among students and/or staff, serious injury to a student, staff member, or community person who had contact with students and/or staff, and other situations deemed by members of the team to be of crisis nature.

Access to school buildings:

- **Limited Access** - All of our school buildings have limited access during the school day with specific visitor check in procedures. Visitors are required to check in at the main office or in the main lobby and wear an identification badge while in the building. Our staff are asked to stop and question those who are not wearing a badge and redirect the person to the main office.
- **Engagement of Visitors** – All district staff are expected to engage visitors and report any suspicious activity or visitors who are in violation of check-in procedures to the office and/or law enforcement.

Community Partners

- **Policy** - The District has in place several policies and procedures related to school safety, including procedures for Registered Sex or Violent Offenders and Relations with the Law Enforcement and Child Protective Agencies. We meet frequently with our community partners to analyze our policies and update as needed.
- **Mental Health** - At every school the school counselors work closely with community mental health professionals, Teton Valley Hospital staff and when needed the Behavioral Health Center at Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center in Idaho Falls.

We recognize students and parents as important partners who serve as a key resource to help us keep our schools safe.

- **Potential Threats** - We take all reports seriously and we work closely with local law enforcement when we believe there is a potential threat. We take immediate action to protect students when we believe the threat to be credible.
- **Student Relationships** - We prioritize our relationships with our students and families. Students are encouraged to tell a trusted adult at school if they have a concern about themselves or another individual. We are often able to intervene to support a student or to mediate a disagreement between students because we are provided with information by caring students. This type of communication would not happen if positive relationships were not nurtured by all in our education community. A specific way this is implemented in all schools is through the 3-R's:
 - **Respect**
 - **Responsible**
 - **Ready**
 - These three areas of expectations are under the State of Idaho Positive Behavior Intervention Systems (PBIS), where clear and consistent expectations are modeled by staff and addressed for students to be accountable for. Another example of the District's commitment to positive relationships is the adoption and implementation of the VOICES mentoring program at Teton High School. Additional student support and training has occurred through the SOS national peer training program, and I2I, sponsored by the Idaho Drug Free Youth Coalition. Restorative Justice Programs have also facilitated the reconciliations process for significant student incidents.
- **Messaging System – (txtwire.com)** we make every effort to keep parents notified when we have potential threats to school safety or if we have an actual emergency event at a school. We also rely on local media sources to help us spread the word in the event of an actual emergency. To help with the process of parent notification, we recently invested in a computer-based program, Text wire messaging service, allows us to send mass text and email messages to parents. We use Text wire to not only communicate information in the event of an emergency, but also to keep parents informed of other special school events and important information.

TSD401 Partners with Public Safety Agencies

School staff work closely with the appropriate local **public safety agencies**, such as sheriff, fire, emergency medical services, and public health to effectively deal with a wide range of crises. Specifically, TSD401 partners with the Teton County Sheriff's Department, Teton County Fire & Rescue Department, Eastern Idaho District 7 Public Health Department, Emergency Services, American Red Cross, and other agencies in planning and training activities to promote emergency preparedness throughout the District and the community.

As a Parent, How Can You Prepare for a School Emergency?

As a parent, there are three simple steps parents can take to prepare for a school emergency.

- Provide **accurate emergency contact information** to your child's school and notify the school immediately if it changes.
- **Subscribe to the District's Text Wire messaging service.** Text wire (txtwire.com), is an electronic notification service that sends e-mail and text messages to your personal or work device. Text Wire provides subscribers with up-to-date information about school closings and cancellations, early dismissals, and other unforeseen emergencies.
- Communicate with your child about **being prepared for emergencies**. This includes taking drills, such as fire and earthquake drills, seriously. It also includes reporting when unidentified visitors are on school property or reporting anything that is out of the ordinary or unusual in the school day to an adult at school.

Communications during a School Emergency

During an emergency, it is critical that parents receive important information and directions from school officials before going to the school or scene of an emergency. You can be confident that accurate and timely information will be released to parents, the public, and the media during any significant emergencies. Should a significant school emergency occur, a parent can get important information and directions by doing one or all of the following:

- Tune into the local television and radio stations for news alerts (Local News 8- Idaho Falls)
- **Check your e-mail** or cell phone if you are subscribed to **Text Wire (text message: txtwire.com) Parents and Staff will be notified directly through Infinite Campus, Messenger.**
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If the school building is evacuated or is locked down, how will I be able to locate my child?

Each school has a procedure for helping parents locate their child (children). Parents will be directed to a specific location where they will be required to show proper identification. **Remember, a student can only be released to an adult that is documented as an emergency contact.** If you are a non-custodial

parent, you must be listed with your child's emergency contact information as a guardian and show proper identification.

Staff Training for Emergencies is Ongoing

As a parent, you should feel confident to know that we provide **emergency and crisis management training** to school administrators and staff. Each school has key staff members with assigned roles and responsibilities to perform during an emergency. The school system's emergency response plan is modeled on the National Incident Management System (NIMS) that has been developed by the Department of Homeland Security. In addition, every school conducts emergency drills throughout the school year so that students and staff are aware of the most effective and safe emergency responses.

Emotional Support for Students during Times of Crisis

It is important that our students feel safe in our schools, especially after a crisis has occurred. Should there be a need, the District provides **psychological services and support** to students and staff through the use of its Crisis Response Team, which includes community partners. The crisis response team will provide assistance to students to help them understand what has happened and to help them cope with their emotions and reactions. For more information, please see the [Resource guide for parents & teachers when talking with children about crisis & tragedy](#).

Stranger Danger

The district publishes Stranger Danger alerts that we receive from the Teton County Sheriff's Department. Awareness of strangers is taught at school, but should also be reinforced at home often and consistently. For additional information, please see [What to Teach Kids About Strangers](#).

The most important points that parents should underscore with their children:

- Be aware of dangerous situations. If a stranger asks you for help or to keep a "special secret," it could be a dangerous situation. Say no and tell a trusted adult.
- Trust your instincts. If you feel scared or uncomfortable, get away from the situation. Make an excuse or just run away, and go to a safe place.
- Know what to do. Think No, Go, Yell, Tell. If you're in a dangerous situation, say no, run away, yell as loud as you can, and tell an adult.
- Ask your parents first. If a stranger invites you to go somewhere, offers you a gift, or just wants to talk, say you need to ask your parents for permission first. Then ask your parents.
- Stick with friends. It's always safer to play in a group.

Closings and Cancellations Due to Weather Conditions

In the interest of student safety, decisions to close schools, delay school openings, or dismiss early due to inclement weather conditions are made by the Superintendent. Radio and TV stations are notified, as well as updates sent by Text messaging (**txtwire.com**), posted on the district Facebook page, and posted on the district website homepage, as soon as a decision is made. Additional days beyond the state requirements are built into the school calendar to accommodate for inclement weather closure days. Please use the following resources to confirm the status of school operations should there be inclement weather conditions. Our threshold for closing school is temperatures and/or wind chill at -25 deg. below zero, and/or hazardous road conditions that make traveling unsafe. The goal is to make this determination before 6:00 am on that day, to provide timely notification for students, parents and staff.

- Tune into the local television and radio stations for news alerts (Local News 8-Idaho Falls)
- **Check your e-mail** or cell phone if you are subscribed to **Text Wire (text message: txtwire.com)** **Parents and Staff will be notified directly through Infinite Campus, Messenger.**
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**This safety summary follows a template from the Bozeman Montana School District #7.*