

Keeping Kids Safe in Mercer County

Positive Behavior Intervention and Support System (PBIS): In an attempt to address behaviors before they become discipline issues, each school in the district has a Positive Behavior Intervention and Support system or framework (PBIS) in place. The PBIS system allows staff to teach students school expectations through positive interactions. The PBIS Team is trained to use this structure to identify students who are struggling with behavior issues and to know how to proceed if students need additional help.

Stop-Bullying Tip line is available 24 hours/ 7days a week for anyone to report bullying concerns or other non-emergencies related issues. (Please call 911 in case of an emergency.) You can access the link to report concerns anonymously on the district webpage.

See Something, Say Something Campaign: Each school has shared the message with their staff and students that if they see something, they must say something. The most effect way to keep schools and students safe is sharing information. We ask that if students or families have information that someone could harm himself or herself or another person, tell an adult. We encourage students to identify at least one adult in the building they trust but we ask families to contact us (or the police) if your child makes you aware of something that is a safety issue.

Enrollment (white) cards- Every year, we ask you to update your child's enrollment information to reflect who you want to have access to your child. Adults must be listed on the white card before we will release a child to leave the building. At Mercer County Elementary school, an adult must be listed on the white card or have parent permission before being allowed to eat lunch with a student.

Limited public access to buildings: Based upon new recommendations, we have asked all secretaries to ask at least three questions before inviting people into our buildings. Once inside the buildings, people must sign in and then sign-out to leave.

School Psychologists and Counselors: Each building has access to a school psychologist and counselor. They help administrators conduct threat assessments and provide guidance to staff and families during crises. Because so many of our children have unmet mental health needs, we collaborate with local outside counseling groups to provide services at the schools.

Safety Committees/ Emergency Plans and Crisis Plans: Each building has a school emergency plan to address emergencies that effect their building. The District has a district emergency plan that addresses situations that are district-wide emergencies. These plans were developed with the input of our local emergency responders and advice from the Kentucky Center for Safe Schools. The district has a safety-committee that meets during the school year to address safety issues. It was during one of these safety meetings that we updated our procedures for staff and students during on how to respond in an active shooter event and when the fire alarm sounds. We only share these plans with school staff and our local emergency responders.

Emergency drills: Each school conducts emergency drills regularly. Many times, administrators will contact the police, sheriff, or fire department to assist us with our drills. We use these drills as opportunities to make improvements to our emergency response. Once we determine a better way of doing something, we update this in our emergency plan.

School Resource Officer (SRO): Officer Daylen Morris, Officer Chad Baker, and Officer TJ Wren have joined us this year as our school resource officers (SRO). They are all police officer who works with the Harrodsburg Police Department. Officer Morris is stationed at MCSH, Officer Baker at KMS, and Officer Wren will rotate between Harrodsburg ATC, MCES, and MCIS. They are always present to help us in emergencies but also spend time talking with kids and building relationships with them.

Safe Schools Audits: Since 2011, we have asked the Kentucky Center for Safe Schools to conduct safety audits of our schools. A team from the Center for Safe Schools comes and observes our school supervision procedures, facilities, and talks with staff, students, and parents to help identify areas of strengths and weaknesses. School and district administrators use the information from these audits to make improvements to our safety procedures.

Numbering system and Cameras: In each building, you may notice numbers on each of the outside doors, windows, and in the hallway. This numbering system helps staff communicate the location of specific emergencies to our local responders quickly so they know specifically were to report. Additionally, the Mercer County Dispatch and our local emergency manager have the ability to access our camera systems in times of emergencies. This allows them to communicate specific locations to the responders, which allows them to respond faster.