



The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington

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Dear Parent/Guardian:

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington Catholic Schools Office is committed to providing the safest possible environment for our students and all school personnel. We want to ensure they have a safe place to learn, work and grow. Over the years, our schools have taken steps to become more secure, but as recent history has dictated, we need to continue to include proactive measures to ensure the safety of all students and staff. To maintain our safety standards and adapt to the societal threat of a violent intruder inside our schools, we adopted ALICE proactive strategies.

Adoption of a lockdown-only response has been deemed insufficient by the Department of Education, independent researchers, and law enforcement. The ALICE strategies have been adopted by schools across the country. ALICE empowers individuals to participate in their survival using proactive options-based responses. ALICE is an acronym for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate. We want to assure you that we went to great lengths to understand exactly what each option entails. We are very comfortable with all the ALICE proactive strategies to empower our students and staff. We will implement these safety strategies in age- and ability-appropriate ways.

In 2018, the Catholic Schools Office sponsored training in the event of a violent critical incident. Each school principal and one or two other school personnel were trained to be an ALICE instructor. With staff transitions over the years, a decision was made to sponsor this training once again, which occurred on September 28 and 29, 2023. Individuals from our schools have become ALICE Certified Instructors.

School staff will be fully trained on the ALICE strategies through online classes and hands-on training with their ALICE Certified Instructor. Training and drills will be provided to students soon. Parents will receive updates directly from each school regarding upcoming drills (which may include evacuation and off-site reunification locations), parent information sessions, and ongoing training updates.

We look forward to working with your students to provide them with the skills they might need at school and in the community, if confronted with a critical violent incident. Please contact your school principal or the Catholic Schools Office, if you have any questions or concerns about the ALICE program.

Thank you for entrusting our schools with your children. I look forward to continuing the work to ensure that our schools are the absolute safest that we can make them.

Sincerely in Christ,

Kelly Branaman
Superintendent of Schools
Secretary for Catholic Schools