

*Chehalis Students  
Prepared Not Scared*



Nov. 14, 2023

## We Strive to be Prepared

In the Chehalis School District, all students and staff undergo training each year that we hope we will never have to use. [ALICE Training](#) is used in the Chehalis School District for potential response to active shooter or violent critical incidents. This curriculum that is used in grades K-12, is aimed at giving students and staff an increased chance of survival of such an incident if it were to occur.

"The annual training we do helps prepare us in case of a violent critical incident," said Chehalis Superintendent Dr. Christine Moloney. "Just like with a natural disasters, we practice and prepare and hope we never have to use the training. But being prepared allows us to better protect our students and our staff. We are very thankful that we have two experienced retired law enforcement officers supporting our students and staff and providing us the best research-based trainings, such as ALICE, to help us keep our schools, our students, and our staff safe."

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## What Does ALICE Mean?

**ALERT** - Your first notification of danger. Recognizing the signs of danger and receiving information about the danger from others (covered in grades 8-12, in grades K-5 students are taught to listen to teacher's instructions)

**LOCKDOWN** - If evacuation is not a safe option, lock the doors and barricade entry points. Prepare to evacuate (covered in grades K-12) or counter (covered a small amount in grades 6-8 and fully in grades 9-12)

**INFORM** - Communicate real time information on shooter location. Use clear and direct language using any communication means possible (covered in grades 8-12, in grades K-5 students are taught to listen to teacher's instructions)

**COUNTER** - As a last resort, distract the shooter's ability to shoot accurately. Move toward exits while making noise, throwing objects or adults swarm shooter (covered a small amount in grades 6-8 and fully in grades 9-12)

**EVACUATE** - When safe to do so, run from danger using non-traditional exits if necessary. Gather at pre-determined rally points (covered in K-12)

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## Skills Students Take Into the World

The acronym ALICE makes the steps taught in the curriculum easier to remember, however, the steps are not meant to be followed in any particular order. ALICE Training teaches staff and students to assess what is happening around them and determine what steps they need to take.

"I like it because it empowers teachers," Troy Thornburg said. "One classroom might be evacuating while another is barricading the door. It gives you options. It's options based."

Teaching ALICE Training to staff and students is just one component of safety for the Chehalis School District. Our district safety officers are always planning for how to create more safe and secure school facilities. Some examples include security cameras throughout the district, the installation of keyless entryways at buildings and identification requirements for all staff and visitors.

"You put the deterrents in place and you teach ALICE and the odds are in your favor," Troy Thornburg said.

Active shooter and violent critical incidents appear to be on the rise nationwide, with more than 550 incidents happening in the United States to date. In the last three years, there have been more than 600 such incidents in the U.S. Todd Thornburg noted that some of these incidents happen at schools but many more others happen in other settings such as the recent mass shooting in Lewiston, Maine. Knowing how to react in the face of a potentially violent situation is a skill that will serve students in and outside of school.

"We are teaching these kids life skills because we know these kinds of incidents don't just happen in schools," said Todd Thornburg.

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## The Right Lesson at the Right Age

While the curriculum used at all grade levels in the Chehalis School District is ALICE based, individual lesson plans are tailored to the age of the students. Just talking about the subject of a violent incident at the school can be scary for students, so some of the trainings for youngest students involve simply how to evacuate to a rally point or how to behave if a classroom or school goes into lockdown.

"It's important to know what grade levels are taught which strategies to use," said Officer Troy Thornburg, district safety officer for Chehalis School District.

One example of ALICE lessons in action in the Chehalis School District is at Orin Smith Elementary. Physical Education teachers Lynn Wakefield and Tom Grunefeld worked with Todd and Troy Thornburg to add an ALICE component to the Social Skills/Social Emotional Learning portions of their curriculum. The lessons include: learning how to navigate the routes to different rally points by walking those paths; practicing staying quiet when evacuating so they can hear directions; and preparing for the fact that in an emergency, first responders may use loud, yelling voices. Wakefield said they also do a lot of talking with these 3rd through 5th graders about how practicing what to do in the event of a potential violent incident is similar to conducting fire drills so students will have confidence they know what to do if an emergency ever happens.

"We try and give them what they need to know so in an emergency, they won't be scared, they'll be prepared," Wakefield said.

Students in grades K-5 are taught the "Lockdown" and "Evacuate" portions of ALICE. ALICE Training stresses that students in this age group are too young to be taught the "Counter" portion of the curriculum. Grades 6-8 receive a small amount of training in "Counter" which are defensive moves that could include things like throwing items or making noise to interrupt a violent individual's ability to observe, orient, decide and act (called an OODA Loop) for a few seconds to allow you to escape. At the high school levels, students subduing a violent individual as a group is covered, but even then, the training stresses that "Counter" is not about fighting.

"We are teaching kids to counter to give them strategies to be safe," said Troy Thornburg. "We're teaching students and staff to have strategies to use both inside and outside of school."

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## How Can Parents Help?

**LOG IN** - Access your [Skyward](#) parent account and make sure your family contact information is correct. This is the information we will use to contact you in the event of any kind of emergency. Make sure you have allowed notifications from the [Remind App](#), which is the district's primary communication tool

**LOOK UP** - Inform yourself about [Navigate 360](#) which administers [ALICE Training](#) taught in Chehalis Schools. You can ask questions of your student or building staff or email Officer [Todd Thornburg](#) or Officer [Troy Thornburg](#). Parents of younger children can purchase the book ["I'm Not Scared ... I'm Prepared"](#) which specifically covers ALICE Training.

**STAY PUT** - In the event of a lock down emergency, parents **SHOULD NOT** come to the school unless instructed to do so by the Chehalis School District. Please stay put and wait for official Chehalis School District information through the [Remind App](#)

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Chehalis School District

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