

Safety is our first priority at Milan Community Schools. We have trained School Resource Officers, paid through state grant funds and local funding. Noel Houze, a retired Indiana State Policeman, leads our efforts. Alongside him are Paul Newton, a retired policeman, and Mike Brandes, our Director of Operations.

The Indiana Department of Education mandates all schools have a comprehensive emergency response plan and those plans are to be reviewed and updated annually. Milan Community Schools has an emergency response plan that is reviewed and updated annually per the DOE requirement. This plan is comprehensive and while no plan can address every possible emergency situation, Milan Schools' plan includes emergency response to inclement weather such as tornadoes and thunderstorms, power outages, fires, injury/illness, Haz Mat incidents, and bomb threats, as well as emergencies such as armed intruders, violent students, gun or other weapon in the school, hostage situations, etc. Milan students and staff participate in all state mandated safety drills throughout the school year.

In 2015 Milan Community Schools purchased a program called Crisis Manager. Crisis Manager is a program where a school's emergency response plan can be posted and made available on a mobile device through a free app. We have three separate applications for this particular technology. We have the district's comprehensive emergency plan, a special events emergency plan, and an anonymous student reporting plan. The comprehensive plan requires a password to download and for security reasons, is only available to MCSC staff.

The special events emergency plan is a basic emergency plan for "after hours" events such as athletic events, concerts, etc. taking place at the school after hours. This plan does not require a password to download and is available to the general public. The anonymous student reporting plan is primarily for students, though anyone can access the plan, (no password required) for those students to make anonymous reports of bullying, weapons in school, drugs in school, or any other safety or security concerns they may have. This feature allows the student to send a report via their mobile device. Once the report is sent, our SRO receives an email with the reported activity but because it allows the sender to remain anonymous, there is no way of knowing who may have sent it. All anonymous student reports are investigated. Anyone who may be interested in having access to the Special Events Plan or the Anonymous Student Reporting plan can email the school. We always encourage students, staff, and our families to say something, if they see something. By working together, we can lessen any potentially dangerous situations.

All Milan Schools utilize the School Guard system. This phone app is designed to reduce the response time for law enforcement if it becomes necessary to respond to an active shooter situation at our schools. All staff have been trained and are able to activate the alarm from their phone. When this would occur, any law enforcement official within a certain mile radius of our school would be notified to respond immediately. This way, off-duty officers, as well as those on duty, whomever is the closest, can respond quickly to de-escalate the situation. The School Guard system can also be activated by the principals for messages to staff, or by staff within a building for minor emergencies.

Since November 2014, Milan Community Schools have been upgrading our security technology. At the HS/MS building we have 89 cameras (includes inside and outside) and at the ES building we have 26 cameras (includes inside and outside). These cameras are digital HD cameras that are web-based so are accessible anywhere internet service is available. Because the cameras are web-based, each of the police agencies serving the Milan Community

(ISP, RCSD, and MPD) have their own username and password so they can access the cameras and receive real time information in an emergency situation occurring at any of our school buildings. Our school buses have also been equipped with updated security cameras

All school buildings have controlled access at their main entrances. Once the school day begins, all doors in all buildings are locked and anyone wishing to enter the building must enter through the main entrances where they have to be “buzzed in” by the secretary. This system has a camera and the secretary can see who is requesting entry and anyone unfamiliar to the secretary will have to provide information as to who they are and why they’re requesting access before they will be allowed in the building.

Another security upgrade we have been phasing in over the last couple of years includes latch bolt monitoring and door contact alarms. Anytime a door is opened, the SRO receives a notification. The notification tells which door has been opened. The latch bolt monitoring tells me if a door is not securely latched and the door contact notification tells me if a door is being held open or has been propped open. There is an immediate response to any door not properly latched or being held/propped open to make sure it is properly secured. This technology also allows us to remotely lock or unlock any door where there is an electronic access point.

Once someone is granted access into the building during the school day, if they plan to leave the office area, they must sign in on a computer containing visitor management software. The visitor will then receive a sticker badge with their name and photo and reason for their visit to the building. This visitor is then required to wear their sticker badge as long as they are in the building. Then when they have completed their visit, they must turn in their badge and sign out. This visitor management system is also used for student sign outs if the student is leaving before the end of the school day for a previously scheduled appointment. Unfortunately, we have a few students who have parents or other relatives who are prohibited contact with the student through a court order. These students are “flagged” in the visitor management program. When these students sign out or are signed out by an adult, an audible warning on the computer sounds alerting office staff verification is required before the adult signing the student out is permitted to leave with that student.

In 2018, keyless classroom door locks were added at the elementary school. Then in 2019, the same locking system was added at the intermediate, middle, and high school. This system allows a teacher to enter the classroom with an access card, and remotely lock the door at anytime necessary.

Despite all the technology available today and the best possible emergency response plans in place, unfortunately, tragedies still occur. In addition to required monthly fire drills and semester tornado drills, we also hold lockdown drills and staff is well versed in emergency procedures. In the case of an emergency, we are well aware that students immediately begin , texting parents of the situation. Naturally, the first instinct is to rush to the school and get your child. We want to caution parents, this is absolutely the worst thing you can do. If we are in a lockdown situation at any Milan school; that is exactly what it is.....lockdown. No one except emergency responders will have access to the building. During the Sandy Hook tragedy in December, 2012, there was one road that led in and out of the school. That road got so clogged with traffic from frantic parents, many first responders had to stop their vehicles hundreds of yards away and walk or run to get to the building. So please do not respond to the school. By doing this, all you’ll do is delay emergency response and could further endanger students and staff.

While some of these security measures can be somewhat of an inconvenience to parents and other visitors at our schools, we want everyone to know the safety of our students and staff is the number one priority at Milan Community Schools. What may seem an inconvenience to parents and other visitors is peace of mind to students and staff. Please contact our school offices with any questions or concerns. We thank you for your understanding.