



Tri-Valley School District

“Home of the Bulldogs”

ALERTNOW RAPID COMMUNICATION SERVICE MAKES CALLS TO TRI-VALLEY PARENTS

January 9, 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians of Tri-Valley Students:

The Tri-Valley School District is in the final stages of implementation of the new AlertNow Rapid Communication System which will notify you of early dismissals, school closings, emergency situations and other announcements. We have successfully made calls of different varieties notifying parents and emergency contacts of student early dismissals. We plan to implement other functions of this system, such as early-morning two hour delay and school closing notification upon final verification of information in the student database.

For the time being, early dismissals, school closings and delays will continue to be reported and listed on local news channels and radio stations.

Please keep the following information in mind in regards to this new automated system:

- Recipients will see the school’s phone number (570-682-9013) on caller IDs for routine calls. Routine calls will only go to a student’s primary home phone number (and primary email address, if applicable) to notify parents of non-urgent announcements.
- Urgent and emergency messages will be displayed as “411” on caller IDs; this makes a distinction between informational calls and urgent or emergency notifications. These types of calls will be made to all phone numbers (and email addresses, if applicable), including those listed as the students’ emergency contacts.
- If at any time you receive a message and have trouble hearing it, the message has not played, or the message stops, simply press any number key (1-9) to replay the entire message.
- The system easily detects noise in the background of a call due to answering machine detection software and interprets this noise as an answering machine greeting. It then pauses and waits for silence to begin playing the message again.

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We are an equal opportunity employer.

District Office

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Principal

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Mahantongo Valley Elementary School

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Gerald J. Anderson
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Special Education Office

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Joy R. Header
Director

~ ALERTNOW INFORMATION CONTINUED ~

- The system will leave a message on a voicemail or answering machine. However, the system is set to ring each line six times. If your answering machine is set to pick up on seven or more rings, the message may not be delivered to your machine. Therefore, we encourage you to set your machine to six rings or fewer.
- If a message that was left on an answering machine was cut off, it's possible that the machine's outgoing message has a long pause somewhere, which would cause the AlertNow message to begin playing early. Parents are encouraged to re-record outgoing messages so that there are no pauses except the one after the beep.
- Parents are advised that when receiving messages on their cell phones, reception issues frequently cause errors, such as no message playing, a delayed start, or a partial message on their voicemail. Particular problems have been noticed with the Sprint and Nextel networks. These networks often have an automated message that says "Please hold while we locate the Nextel/Sprint subscriber," and then there's a pause, which our system thinks is the proper time to start playing the message.

As the District continues to use this service, it is essential that parents keep their phone and contact information up-to-date with their child's school. **If you have a change, notify your child's school building office immediately** so that the system remains as current as possible. Please also call your child's school office if there is an emergency contact currently being called that you would like removed from the system.

We look forward to full deployment of a cutting-edge system that allows for a fast and accurate way of communicating with parents. Please call 682-9013 if you have any questions about this new system.

Respectfully,

Mark D. Snyder
Superintendent

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