

# **San Diego Unified School District**

## **Walkie-Talkie**

### **Guidelines**

### **2019-2020**

#### **Guideline for Walkie Talkies for SDEA Members**

*Please note these guidelines are not required for use and may be used as determined by sites. These guidelines are recommended best practices for walkie-talkie use, to support each site's developed processes and procedures, in conjunction with all district policies and procedures.*

#### **Background and Rationale**

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide alignment between the district service departments and all school sites. Understanding the increased safety concerns nationally and recognizing that all staff is responsible for their safety and the safety responses for all personnel on a given site, we believe staff that is directly responsible for students must have resources to respond should an emergency on the campus arise. This includes access to ingress and egress as well as minimum lines of communication.

In alignment with our Collective Bargaining Agreement, Article 11, between the District and San Diego Educators Association, we will ensure our educators are equipped with walkie-talkies and are provided guidelines for appropriate use.

#### **Expectations**

All unit members shall be provided with adequate communication devices to enable immediate communication with all other staff on campus in the event of an emergency. In addition to a phone in every classroom, and unit member workspaces, walkie-talkies will be provided. We want to ensure we are utilizing this tool in a safe, professional and diligent manner.

#### **Per the collective bargaining agreement walkie-talkies are for use in emergency situations only.**

Emergencies are serious, unexpected events, and often dangerous requiring immediate action. They include the following captured in the school safety plans: Fire, Earthquake, Lockdown, and Shelter in Place.

Failure to follow the guidelines, expectations, and general use of the walkie-talkie as set by the site administrator, may lead to discontinued use and/or disciplinary action.

## **Fundamental Processes**

1. Walkie-Talkies must be taken off the charger in the morning and powered on
2. Staff will power off the walkie-talkie and place it in the charger at the end of their shift
3. Walkie-Talkies are to remain in the presence of the unit member at all times when with students, both inside and outside the classroom
4. All teachers will keep their radio turned on and set to Channel 3 at all times (Unless reporting an emergency - see below #7)
5. During instruction, Walkie-Talkie will be on at a low volume level that can be heard in case of emergencies
6. Students should be taught how to use the walkie-talkie in case of an emergency where the teacher is not able to respond due to the actual emergency
7. If a teacher needs to report an emergency, the teacher will switch the walkie-talkie to Channel 1 to notify the administrator. They should wait for direction and then switch back to Channel 3, unless the administrator believes it is necessary for the educator to stay on Channel 1 for ongoing direct communication.
  - Remember, all other educators should remain on Channel 3 for general communication in case of an emergency. Switching back and forth may cause educators to miss valuable information and minimize communication effectiveness.
8. Each walkie-talkie must have these fundamental processes laminated (sample below) and adhered to the charging station and walkie-talkie for Visiting Teachers and for student use, if necessary.
9. Visiting Teacher folders should have these processes adhered to the folder as well.

## **Sample**

- Keep walkie-talkie turned on, remove from charger base and turned to Channel 3.
- To report an emergency, turn the dial on top to Channel 1 - press talk button on the left side of the walkie-talkie then speak “Visiting teacher to administrator” release talk button and wait for a response.
- Return walkie-talkie to Channel 3 after reporting any emergency and listen for direction, unless directed to remain on Channel 1.
- Turn walkie-talkie off and return to Charger Base at the end of day.

## **Distribution**

Bearcom is the outside agency that will work directly with school sites to ensure the appropriate number of walkie-talkies, chargers, and cords. IT is our district representative for all questions related to physical walkie-talkie and distribution. If a repeater is needed to ensure walkie-talkie coverage throughout the campus, Bearcom will be contracted to install. Repeaters are not included in this initial project; however, we are aware repeaters may be needed. Each site will work directly with IT if there is a suspicion that a repeater is needed.

Any non-working or broken walkie-talkies should be given to IT during site survey or delivery visit for recycling. There is no need to store excess walkie-talkies.

Please use the following [Staff Key Receipt form](#) and [School Guidelines for Key Distribution](#), or a site derivative, for all staff check in and check out of walkie-talkies.

## **General Programming**

To ensure communication between existing walkie-talkies and new walkie-talkies, we need to continue the same setup of the initial walkie-talkie rollout program. The following programming will be used. If your site would like additional channels programmed for specific walkie-talkies please work with Bearcom and Sandra Arellano in IT, when contacted for your site walkie-talkie distribution.

1. Each site has current walkie-talkies programmed according to the initial parameters: Three assignments are:
  - Green walkie-talkies: Admin – only for admin use
  - Blue walkie-talkies: Staff – for all staff use
  - Red: Primetime – only Primetime staff
2. Additional blue walkie-talkies are assigned and programmed with the following channels:
  - Channel 1: General communication for walkie-talkie site traffic
  - Channel 2: Admin designation only
  - Channel 3: Designated for SDEA staff
  - Channel 5: Reserved for site's Prime Time
  - Channel 16: Emergency Responders use only. Site admin may hear but will not have talk access

**The Grid below will clearly depict the channels to which each member of the school has access.**

<b><u>Channel</u></b>	<b><u>Assignment</u></b>			<b><u>Purpose</u></b>
	<b><u>Admin (Green)</u></b>	<b><u>Staff (Blue)</u></b>	<b><u>PrimeTime (Red)</u></b>	
<b><u>1</u></b>	<b><u>X</u></b>	<b><u>X</u></b>	<b><u>X</u></b>	<b><u>General communication for walkie-talkie site traffic and for SDEA members to report emergencies</u></b>
<b><u>2</u></b>	<b><u>X</u></b>			<b><u>Administration communication only</u></b>
<b><u>3</u></b>	<b><u>X</u></b>	<b><u>X</u></b>	<b><u>X</u></b>	<b><u>Assigned Channel for SDEA members</u></b>
<b><u>5</u></b>	<b><u>X</u></b>	<b><u>X</u></b>	<b><u>X</u></b>	<b><u>Reserved for site's Prime Time</u></b>
<b><u>16</u></b>	<b><u>X</u></b>	<b><u>X</u></b>	<b><u>X</u></b>	<b><u>Emergency Responders only</u></b>

### **Replacement**

1. Walkie-Talkies come with a three-year warranty that includes walkie-talkie, battery, antenna, belt clip and walkie-talkie charger. If battery replacement is needed, users are to contact the IT Help Desk. All walkie-talkie support requests will be channeled through the IT Help Desk for consistency and follow-through. A case will be created and assigned to Bearcom for resolution by their technicians.
2. New walkie-talkies may be purchased under the existing contract and within the terms. Sites may submit a service request for a new walkie-talkie by contacting the IT Help Desk. Walkie-talkies are only for SDEA members.
3. IT will pay for damaged, lost, or replacement of walkie-talkies.
4. In the event a walkie-talkie is stolen it may not be disabled; however, when the battery of the walkie-talkie runs out of power it will be unusable without the walkie-talkie charger.

### **Etiquette**

It helps two-way walkie-talkie communication when every user understands and uses similar language and etiquette, especially when more than two people using a specific channel.

## **4 Golden Rules of Walkie-Talkie Communication**

Utilize these guidelines when communicating via two-way walkie-talkie:

1. **Clarity:** Your voice should be clear. Speak a little slower than normal. Speak in a normal tone, do not shout.
2. **Simplicity:** Keep your message simple enough for intended listeners to understand.
3. **Brevity:** Be precise and to the point.
4. **Security:** Do not transmit confidential information on a walkie-talkie unless you know the proper security technology is in place. Remember, frequencies are shared; you do not have exclusive use of the frequency.

### **Basic Walkie-Talkie Information**

1. When using a two-way walkie-talkie, you cannot speak and listen at the same time, as you can with a phone.
2. Do not interrupt if you hear other people talking.
3. Do not respond if you are not sure that the call is for you. Wait until you hear your call sign/name to respond.
4. Never transmit sensitive, confidential, financial, or military information.
5. Perform periodic walkie-talkie checks to ensure your walkie-talkie is in good working condition.

### **Think Before You Speak**

1. Decide what you are going to say and consider who your audience is.
2. Make your conversations as concise, precise, and clear as possible.
3. Avoid long and complicated sentences. If your message is long, divide it into separate, shorter messages.
4. Do not use abbreviations unless they are well understood by your group.

### **Walkie-Talkie User's Language**

**Go Ahead** – I can respond, go ahead with your message

**Say Again** – Repeat your last message

**Stand-by** – I acknowledge your transmission, but I am unable to respond now.

**10-4/Copy** – Message received and understood.

**Affirmative** – Yes (Avoid yup, nope, etc.)

**Negative** – No

**Over** – I have finished speaking

**Out** – This conversation is finished; the channel is available for others.

### **Making a Call**

Follow these easy steps to make a call:

1. First, **listen to ensure the channel is clear** for you.
2. **Press the PTT** (Push-To-Talk) button.
3. **Wait** 2 seconds:
4. **Say, "recipient's call sign (name). THIS IS your call sign (name). OVER."**
5. Once the person replies, **convey your message.**
6. Wait for the recipient to acknowledge your transmission.
7. Proceed with conversation using walkie-talkie protocol.

### **Answering a Call**

After hearing someone call you on the walkie-talkie, follow these steps to answer a call and join a conversation:

1. **Say "THIS IS" and "your call sign (name) GO AHEAD. OVER."**
2. **Listen** to the caller's transmission/message.
3. **Acknowledge** the caller's transmission by **saying Copy; respond** with requested information, if necessary. **Say, "OVER,"** when finished transmitting.
4. Proceed with conversation using walkie-talkie protocol and language.

### **Sample Dialogue**

Below is a sample dialogue that puts these steps to use:

**Tobie:** Lisa, this is Tobie. Over.

**Lisa:** Tobie, this is Lisa, Stand By. Over.

**Lisa:** Tobie, this is Lisa, Go Ahead. Over.

**Tobie:** Lisa, there is a transient walking down the hall by Room 121. Over.

**Lisa:** Tobie, I copy, confirming a transient by Room 121. Notifying School Police. Over.

**Tobie:** 10-4, Lisa, thanks for calling School Police. Over and Out.

## Walkie-Talkie Communication Tips

1. Leave a second or two when switching between callers to give others a chance to enter the conversation.
2. It is always best to **speak in short simple phrases** on the walkie-talkie and toss the conversation back and forth with the word "**OVER.**"
3. **Wait 2-3 seconds before speaking after pushing the PTT button.** Do not speak immediately when you press the PTT (push to talk) button because there is an automatic transmission delay. If you speak as soon you press the PTT button, it can chop off your first syllable or word, making it hard to understand. If that word does not transmit clearly, you will be forced to repeat yourself, using precious time and running down your batteries faster.
4. Be patient and give the other person a few seconds to reply before re-transmitting your communication. The other person may not be able to respond immediately.

## Training

1. Per the contract with Bearcom, technical training is available if needed.
2. Principals should provide training on the actual usage, with a demonstration.

Again, these guides are to provide alignment between the district service departments and all school sites. The intention is to support principals and educators to have equipment to assist in the safe environments we desire for school sites. Thank you to group of site leaders who provided feedback and direction in the creation of these guidelines.

## FAQs

1. **Provide clarity on who gets walkie-talkies.**

These guidelines are specifically for SDEA members. All SDEA members should be provided a Walkie-Talkie.

2. **“Check the contract, teachers can’t break their contract and turn down walkie-talkies” Mandated per SDEA?**

The guidelines above articulate the process for Walkie Talkies.

3. **Teacher does not want a walkie-talkie in 2019 but changes mind and wants it mid-year or in 2020? Process?**

If a teacher refuses a walkie-talkie, please encourage them to take one, and have them sign a document of refusal. If they want a walkie-talkie later please assign one to them.

4. **New teachers next year. Do they get them?**

All teachers on campus must be provided a walkie-talkie.

5. **Are classified personnel (other than supervision) getting walkie-talkies or is this only SDEA?**

Only SDEA.

6. **Guidance on staff safety protocols on how to use the walkie-talkies for this purpose?**

Please see guidelines above.

7. **Guidance on how to discipline staff for misuse or lost walkie-talkie? Can their walkie-talkie be taken away from them?**

Please follow the Collective Bargaining Agreement for progressive discipline.

8. **Will staff walkie-talkies be different from admin/supervision walkie-talkies?**

No, however, the channel designation will be as stated above.

9. **Concerns about security and breach of privacy if people can hear “security pick up Johnny and bring them to the principal’s office”**

First, if current protocols do not include earpieces this is already a problem. Second, there should be a current channel that is designated for these calls and the new guidelines indicate classroom walkie-talkies would be on a separate channel.

10. **Want a form like i21 form where teacher has to sign they are receiving and that they are financially responsible for returning what was issued?**

Please see guidelines -Included

11. **Want multiple/different channel walkie-talkies for supervision and admin so they can conduct business as they do now.**

Please see guidelines - Included