



Since our acquisition of the AlertNow Rapid Communication Service, we have had opportunities to implement the system. Consequently, we have received feedback from many of our residents. We would like to thank our community members for providing us information that will enable us to ensure the most effective use of the system. Therefore, the following protocols will be utilized:

- The AlertNow system will not be used for weather-related school delay and closing announcements between **5:00 AM and 8:00 AM**. Weather-related school delay and closing information will continue to be available on our website and announced on various local television and radio stations. This practice is being implemented because of the variability that exists in our families' morning schedules.
- The AlertNow system will be used for all unplanned early dismissals, including early dismissals due to inclement weather. These calls will go to home, work, and cell phone numbers (maximum of five) that are listed in your child's records.
- The AlertNow system will be used during those early morning hours for emergency announcements that are not weather-related. These calls will go to home, work, and cell phone numbers (maximum of five) that are listed in your child's records.
- The AlertNow system may be used for other important announcements as deemed appropriate by the Administration, however, such announcements will not be made between the hours between 9:00 PM and 8:00 AM, unless it is an **emergency**. Announcement calls will only go to your primary number, which in most cases is the home phone number listed in your child's records.

If you have not received any of our calls, or if you have encountered problems with the calls that you have received, please read over this list of frequently asked questions for some helpful answers.

Why have I never received a call?

Your contact information in our student database may not be correct. Please call Jill Kramer at the District Office, 626-3734 x3709, to verify the information. You may also verify the information by logging onto webgrades through the Warwick website and clicking the tab labeled "Contact Info". If you see any discrepancies, please email your changes to jkramer@warwicksd.org.

I said "hello" and no message played. Why?

The AlertNow system plays the message as soon as the phone is picked up. However, errors can occur if the person repeatedly says "hello" or answers in a noisy environment (i.e. traffic, children playing, loud music or television, dogs barking, etc.). Generally, if a person offers an extended greeting such that it overlaps the AlertNow message, the system pauses, waits for silence, and replays the message from the beginning. With background noise, it is possible that the system was unable to detect the end of the "greeting" and thus the message did not initiate. In a noisy environment, where silence is unattainable, call recipients can press any number (1-9) and the message will play from the beginning without interruption.

How does the AlertNow system distinguish a live person from an answering machine?

In short, AlertNow utilizes the industry's most Advanced Answering Machine Detection (AAMD) software. The system starts the broadcast immediately upon telephone pickup; simultaneously, it is listening for interruptions. If the system is not interrupted by noise or someone speaking within the first 3.5 seconds, the message is delivered in its entirety. If the system detects a greeting longer than a few seconds, the system treats this as an outgoing message from an answering machine and will wait for a pause (usually after the beep) before delivering the message to be recorded.

What if the line is busy or there is no answer?

The AlertNow system will make up to four attempts to reach each number, with three minutes in between each call. If the message is not delivered by the fourth attempt, it is considered a failed number. Failures happen when a phone number is busy, disconnected, invalid, etc.

Why is my answering machine recording only half of the message?

If the answering machine greeting is sporadic with varied periods of silence, the system will read this as a live person and begin playing the message, even though the machine has yet to start recording. This will result in a recording of silence (if the AlertNow message finishes playing before the machine begins recording) or of just the last portion of the AlertNow message. The recommended solution is to re-record your outgoing message so that there are no pauses. If the answering machine is set to record for a specific amount of time (e.g. 30 seconds) and the AlertNow message runs longer than that, this will also result in message cut-off. The recommended solution is to set your machine to record for a longer period. For voice mailboxes where it is necessary to enter a mailbox number, AlertNow is unable to leave a message.

My caller ID showed that the school had called but there was no voicemail. Why?

If there is a break or a substantial silence in the outgoing message, the system determines it has reached a live person and begins the message prior to the voicemail recording engaging. Please make sure that the greeting is seamless to facilitate successful message delivery.

Why doesn't the school's phone number appear on the caller ID?

AlertNow passes the caller ID information to the local telephone carriers, but it is up to those carriers to pass it along to their customers. Furthermore, different local telephone companies process caller ID information differently. Some provide the name associated with the number, while others do not. For example, a telephone company may require an individual to subscribe to "Advanced Caller ID" in order to receive the school name along with the phone number. Unfortunately, we have no control over this feature; however, D&E does appear to show our main number correctly on phones with Caller ID.

Will the system call phone numbers with extensions?

The AlertNow system only works with direct-dial phone numbers. The system is unable to navigate menus or extensions.

I have D&E Telemarketer Block (privacy manager) on my home phone. How will that affect the call?

Because the AlertNow system is automated, it is unable to press 1# to bypass the block. In order to receive an AlertNow call, you must authorize D&E to unblock the school's phone number, 717-626-3734. Please note that even if you provide authorization, there is a chance that you may not receive a call. AlertNow calls are routed through various long distance carriers. If your AlertNow call comes from an AT&T call center, D&E does not recognize the call because AT&T adds a "1" in front of the area code. Verizon call centers do not add the country code of "1" in front of the area code, so the call is recognized by D&E as a call to unblock. In other words, for those who have D&E Telemarketer Block, sometimes the AlertNow calls go through and sometimes they do not. Unfortunately, the School District has no control over this situation.

My answering machine isn't recording the message. Why?

The system will leave a message on your 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 or voicemail to six rings or less.

More information is available at www.AlertNow.com