

COMMUNICATION DURING A CRISIS

The Governing Board believes that honest, open and timely communication during a crisis is essential.

A crisis, as referred to in this context, refers to any unusual and/or negative action, activity or incident which could reasonably attract the attention or involvement of law enforcement agencies and/or health officials and/or representatives of the news media. Examples would include, but are not limited to, situations such as: criminal activities involving students, staff or Board members; death of students or staff; physical injury to students or staff which require hospitalization; violence on a school campus; sexual or physical abuse of students or staff; and the outbreak of communicable diseases on a school campus.

School employees having knowledge of a crisis will, immediately upon learning of the crisis, contact the top site administrator or designee. The school employee with the most information about the crisis will describe the nature of the crisis and all details which are known at the time of notification.

Principals, designees, and district level administrators are responsible for immediately notifying the Assistant Superintendent of Student Services or Safe Schools Coordinator, who will notify all line officers immediately of any crisis that occurs.

In the event that the Superintendent or designee is not available, crises will be reported to the highest ranking district administrator available at the time of the report.

After notification of a crisis, it will be the responsibility of the Director of Administrative Services to coordinate and direct all internal and external communication regarding the crisis.

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent or designee to notify Board members of a crisis in a timely and expeditious fashion. The Superintendent or designee will also contact parent/guardian group representatives and bargaining unit leadership when appropriate.

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent or designee to determine if, and when, the district will initiate communication about a crisis.

Whenever possible, the district shall be proactive--announcing news or feature stories before requested to do so.

The Emergency Response Team (composed of Student Services staff) and the Director of Administrative Services shall be available to go directly to the sites of the crisis to assist. Authorized news media may be provided with guided access to school facilities. However, the district also reserves the right to deny access to any areas which may disrupt the educational process. A designated area for interviews will be provided.

COMMUNICATION DURING A CRISIS (continued)

This policy on crisis communication will be reviewed with all employees annually.