

Communication Director (CD)

All communication responsibilities will be transferred to the Communication Director She will serve as the official spokesperson. When a crisis occurs, the Communication office should be notified immediately (513-268-0887). The District Communication Director will have two work locations during a major emergency, on the scene and from the BOE administration office.

The Communication Director will:

- act as a communications liaison to responding emergency agencies and District officials team members
- manage on scene media relations, will serve as central media coordinator, address District wide issues related to the crisis
- work closely with the Communication's Secretary, who will work from the BOE Administration Office and coordinate any support for the on scene team.

Emergency responsibilities include:

- set up the official media "news center" site – located away from the Command Post and students/staff
- act as the official spokesperson for the school and District
- respond to staff questions
- get approval from the Building Principal for any written and/or verbal communications for the media, parents, and community
- coordinate joint press releases and briefings with law enforcement, fire department and Communication Director
- address the media via direct face to face communication, press releases, etc. Statements must be approved by the Building Principal and/or District Communication Director
- monitor news broadcasts about the emergency and correct any misinformation immediately
- report current emergency situation to appropriate District administration and security personnel

Media Requirements and communication guidelines should be followed:

- establish a clearly defined area, outside of the building, in which to locate all media personnel, remove media personnel from campus if they leave the assigned media area
- assign one staff member and one alternate to act as key communicator with the media - this individual must have an operable cell phone at all times in order to maintain communications between the command center and the media location. Assign one building phone line for this use only!
 - do NOT release any information about specific students or staff members involved in the incident
 - do NOT release names of any victims; this should be done by law enforcement after relatives are contacted
 - remember that student records are confidential! The only information that we provide is the school a student attends and the grade level. NO achievement or personality data should be shared with the media. Parent/student contact information cannot be shared
 - share only information about what the school is doing in response to the incident as authorized by the Communication Director. Let law enforcement/fire personnel answer questions related to the incident itself
 - only provide information that is certain. Don't speculate, spread rumors or guess
 - if you don't know an answer or a decision hasn't been made yet about an issue, tell the media that. It's okay to say "I don't know" or "We haven't decided yet." Get back to the media when you do know or when a decision has been made
 - avoid "no comment" responses; instead explain why you can't answer a question. Tell the media when you might be able to answer their question
 - NEVER go "off the record"
 - DON'T give exclusive interviews
 - address the media face-to-face communication, press releases, etc. All statements must be approved by the Communication Director
 - monitor news broadcasts about the emergency and correct any misinformation immediately

- report current emergency situation to appropriate District administration and security personnel
- make sure that the media is informed of why they cannot be in the building or on school grounds
- give the media an approximate time when information will be available and provide timely updated information
- don't depend on the media as the only source of communication
- the "hotter" the situation, the "warmer" the communication medium should be. Face-to-face communication, such as meetings, is best in serious crises
- use all available sources to communicate: telephone, automated phone system, e-mail, text messages, letters, meetings
- if approved and appropriate, provide opportunities for the media to interview approved (by CD) district personnel
- contact area hospitals about the incident and alert them to expect the media
- provide the media with school fact sheets and site maps – fact sheets can provide general information about the school
- coordinate approved media information between the Building Principal, and district communication's office
- coordinate joint press releases and briefings with law enforcement and fire department personnel
- arrange regular staff, parent and student meetings to provide updates
- assign several staff members and alternates to supervise the media and keep them in the assigned media location. Responsibilities include:
 - supervising the assigned media and ensuring that media personnel remain in the area
 - if feasible and appropriate, have media personnel sign in on a media form indicating their names and whom they represent
 - keep students and parents out of the assigned media area
- keep school personnel out of the media area unless approved by the Communication Director
- set up a hotline for incoming calls. If the crisis is serious, the hotline should be manned for a certain period of time. Decide how many hours a day the phone should be manned. Later the hotline can have a recorded message updated regularly
- use e-mail to update staff and key community leaders daily
- send letters home with students to inform parents about the crisis and what the school is doing about it
- provide daily fact sheets for staff throughout the district. These can be e-mailed.
- use automated phone system to notify parents and staff quickly of updates
- use voice mail to communicate with staff, central administration and neighboring schools
- use automated phone system to call every parent and staff member immediately after a serious crisis