

# COMMUNICATION PLANNING GUIDE



Topic: \_\_\_\_\_ Goal: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## NOTIFICATION SEQUENCE

Person/Party	Date/Time to Contact	Person Responsible	Messages	Date/Time Completed	Follow Up/ Comments
Board of Education					
Cabinet					
Site Leaders					
Union Leadership					
District Office Staff					
Maintenance Department					
IT Department					
PFA/C Presidents/Parents					
Elected Officials					
City Officials					
Media					
Retirees					
Community Stakeholders					
Business Community					
Faith Community					
School District Stakeholders					
Others (e.g., Law Enforcement, County Health, CDE, etc.)					
Website/Social Media					
Press Release Needed (Y/N)					

This Planning Guide is a summary only and not legal advice. We recommend that you consult with legal counsel to determine how this may apply to your specific facts and circumstances. F3 offers clients communications services when topics, such as negotiations, employee matters and social media issues, capture community and media attention. For more information or assistance with communications planning, please contact the F3 Communications Department: 323.330.3300.

## TIPS FOR WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

- Don't Be Shy. Get to know the reporters who cover your district. Don't wait for an emergency to meet the media.
- Be A Leader. Offer to meet regularly with reporters. Become a source of information on federal and state education issues.
- Deadline Difficulties. Explain the need for adequate time to meet deadlines.
- Reciprocal Respect. Call and thank reporters when they do nice pieces on the district, and when they treat a difficult subject with respect and accuracy.
- It's All On The Record. Do not ask to speak off the record. Do not go off the record.
- Great Question, May I Get Back To You? If you do not know the answer just say so, and offer to get back to the reporter with the answer/information.
- Transparency. If you have nothing to hide, don't hide. Honor Public Records Act requests in a timely fashion.
- No Jargon Allowed. Try to provide information in a manner that all readers or listeners will understand.
- Student Privacy. Be sure and review your board policies on the media's access to campus and students/staff. The media cannot cause a material disruption to campus activity or instruction, and the district and site have an obligation to protect the privacy of minors.
- Make Your Point. Have three key messages.
- Facts Speak Volumes. Have data to support your points.
- Your Own Voice. Make sure you're comfortable presenting messages in your own words.
- "Blank Space." When conversing reporters might leave "blank space" hoping to draw "unintended" comments. Remember, when you've made your point, stop talking.
- Camera Rules. Today, we are surrounded by cameras, when addressing a crowds/at an event, consider that you are always on camera.
- Sit Still. Do not fidget during the interview.
- Body Language. Make eye contact. Guard against nodding when a reporter asks a question as this can appear that you agree with the question or issue being raised.
- In Advance? Ask, "what is the story?"

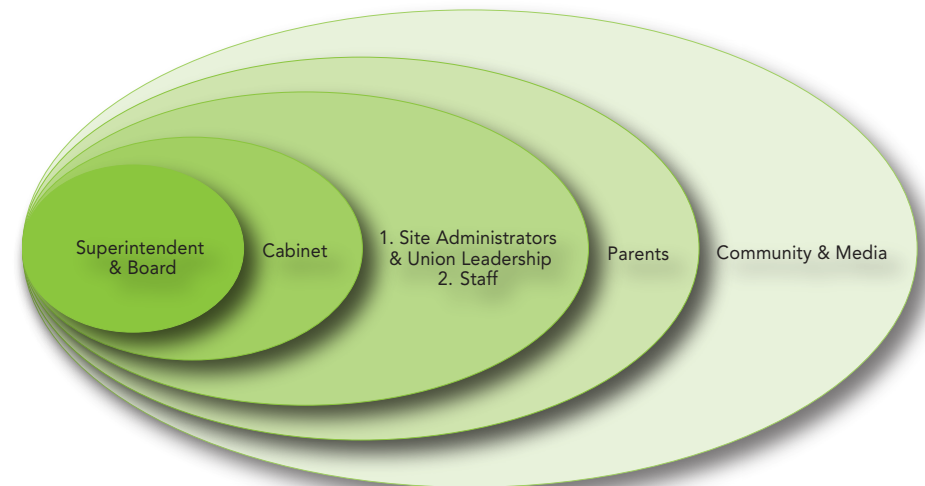
## KEY COMMUNICATIONS TIPS

### Tone Matters

- Demonstrate calm confidence.
- Do not take pointed questions personally.
- Show empathy, and action if necessary.
- Speak to concerned employees and parents; the reporter is not your audience.

### Tips for Managing a Crisis

- Tell the truth.
- Show empathy for those impacted by the situation and commit to work with lead agencies, or take care of "it" if action is required of the District.
- Allow lead agencies to speak on crises that fall under their purview, e.g. law enforcement to speak on campus violence, fire department on a fire, health department on a health outbreak, etc.
- Make sure you have a district leader at the emergency site and a point person back at the district office who can take all calls and prepare next-steps communication.
- Using concentric circles approach (at right), be sure to disseminate information to all the key audiences in the organization. Provide statements for their use.



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