

## **Crisis Management** (Crisis Management Team)

### **Purpose**

To assist the principal and staff of the school to reduce any disorder which might be brought about because of a crisis in the school.

### **Membership**

Superintendent, school principals, guidance staff, juvenile officer, nursing staff, faculty representatives and others as designated by a school principal.

### **Process**

In the event of a perceived crisis in a district school, the superintendent shall be notified by the building principal and after consultation with the principal shall determine whether or not to activate the Crisis Management Team. If activated, the team shall be responsible for:

1. Gathering and coordinating information relating to the potential crisis.
2. Determining if an actual crisis exists.
3. Acting as a clearinghouse for information on the crisis.
4. Providing information to the superintendent concerning the crisis for press/media information release.
5. Meeting with community leaders as needed to provide them with information concerning the crisis.
- \*6. Through the school principal, informing all staff members of the facts surrounding the crisis and advising the staff to discuss the facts of the crisis only. The team will ask the staff to monitor student behavior and refer depressed/withdrawn students.
- \*7. Through the school principal, informing students of the facts surrounding the crisis.
- \*8. Through the school principal, informing parents of the facts surrounding the crisis and emphasizing the importance of keeping school in session and on schedule.
9. Providing staff support.

### **Superintendent's responsibility**

1. Notify Board members that a crisis exists and update them on the progress of the team.
2. The superintendent is designated as the individual to respond to media inquiries and shall develop a prepared statement, if appropriate, which may include:
  - a. A statement of personal sorrow and a sense of loss.
  - \*b. The word "tragic" or "tragedy" should be included so that other students at risk view the death as a tragedy rather than an opportunity for glory.
  - \*c. Describe how school personnel and students have responded to the tragedy.
  - d. Identify actions/interventions taken and future plans.
3. Be a member of the Crisis Management Team.

### **Principal's responsibility**

1. Notify the superintendent of a potential crisis.
2. Notify the faculty that a crisis has occurred.
3. Chair the Crisis Management Team.
4. Gather information concerning the crisis.
5. Draft a letter with the assistance of the Crisis Management Team to be made available to faculty members.
6. In the event of a death, contact the family of the deceased to offer condolences and to inquire about the desirability of attendance at services by faculty and/or students. Family responses to these issues should be incorporated into the written statement.
7. Introduce faculty to members of the team and inform them of the availability of the team throughout the day.
8. With the assistance of the director of student services, make arrangements for additional staff deemed necessary.
9. Prepare and announce the school schedule for the day and alert the entire staff to a debriefing meeting at the end of the school day.
10. Offer to meet with the family in the case of injured/deceased and provide assistance.

### **Guidance/counseling staff responsibility**

1. Be available to meet with the family of the injured/deceased and provide assistance as needed.
2. Assist by directly providing and coordinating the efforts of others to support individuals or groups of students, faculty, staff, parents, juvenile officer and school psychologist.
3. Contact the area clergy in order to coordinate local youth services and activities.
4. Conduct follow-up meetings with family of deceased and others if appropriate.
5. In case of death, gather all the belongings of the individual and deliver them to the principal.
6. In case of a deceased student, remove student's name from the attendance rolls and like listings.
7. Be available throughout the day during the first few days following the crisis to provide support for students, faculty, staff and parents.

### **School nurse responsibility**

Be prepared to receive an influx of students who may appear with a wide range of symptoms.

### **Faculty responsibility**

1. Identify students who are close friends of the injured or deceased as well as other individuals who would like an opportunity to attend a group session or individual meeting with guidance personnel.
2. Identify students who are in distress, consult with them or have another student escort them to one of the group meetings or to one of the members of the Student Services Team.
3. Consider postponement of tests, shorten assignments or try to provide highly structured assignments.
4. Provide an opportunity for students to discuss the loss, stages of grief, sharing the loss and what they have learned from the tragic experience.
5. If students are restless, get them active and focused on a project.
6. In case of a student death, remove the student's name from the class record, grade reports, attendance sheets and marking lists.

7. Acknowledge emotions through discussions and through involvement in constructive classroom activities. Use assignments as an opportunity to ventilate and channel anger.

\*If appropriate

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