



Crisis Response

A Legal, Media and Social Media Approach

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LEGAL TIPS

- Use media proactively and regularly to communicate about all the amazing things that are happening in your school—before there is a crisis.
- If the crisis involves a potential criminal matter, make sure you have permission from the police before you make a statement—interfering with a police investigation is a crime and can lead to personal liability.
- Only report on facts you are personally aware of, i.e. first-hand knowledge and not hearsay from other people or speculation
- Do not offer personal opinions about the facts.
- Do not release any FERPA-related information about students—make sure to review your directory information policy.
- Do not release confidential employee information.
- Discuss your policies and commitment to those policies.
- Discuss school safety plans as appropriate.
- Discuss your student code of conduct in a general manner, as appropriate.
- Discuss your employee handbook provisions in a general manner, as appropriate.
- Contact your legal counsel for review—your regular general counsel, or PACE preloss at preloss@osba.org.

MEDIA TIPS

- **PEOPLE NEED SOLACE:** You can, and should, provide them reassurance in troubling times. Failing to do so can lead to rumors taking over.
- **BE GENUINE:** It's OK to let your feelings show. Doing so creates empathy.
- **IT'S ALL ABOUT STUDENTS:** Virtually all your messaging should tie in with students. They are why you do what you do.

SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

- **RESPOND QUICKLY:** Using social media allows for a rapid response to the broadest possible audience.
- **MONITOR BUZZ:** Pay attention to the conversation(s) going on about the crisis, and help direct them.
- **ENGAGE:** Aim for dialogue. This can be achieved by posing a message, listening to the response, and replying appropriately. Ask community members to help multiply your reach by sharing the news with their friends and groups.