

CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN

SOUTHWEST TECHNICAL CENTER

Precursor

This plan will be implemented at the discretion of the Tech Center Principal or his/her designee in the event of a crisis. For the purposes of this plan, a crisis will be defined as an attempted suicide, serious accident or death of a student or staff member. Crisis inherently involves emotional turmoil. Traumatic events are sudden, powerful events which are outside the range of ordinary daily human experiences. In a crisis/traumatic event situation, even well-trained, experienced people can experience a sense of strong emotions. The school community's response to a death or similar crisis will set the stage for how well people cope with the loss. The best approach to a death is to acknowledge the death, encourage people to express their emotions and feelings, and provide adequate supportive assistance and counseling.

How Do I Report a Death or Crisis Situation?

Any staff member who learns of a student/staff member death or similar crisis situation must immediately contact Ms. Joanne Witt, Principal. If not available, he/she must continue, until contact is made with the first available of Amy Barr or Ami Larson.

Summary of Crisis Response Plan

I. Objectives

- A. **Reduce fear:** Fear resides in the unknown, especially when murder or suicide are involved. Provide detailed, complete, accurate information concerning the crisis. Dispel rumors.
- B. **Provide support:** All school personnel need to be aware of the facts and be involved in helping each other to cope. Students/staff identified as being at high risk need extra support.
- C. **Facilitate grieving:** Grieving is a necessary, healthy and normal response to loss: a healing process. Productive ways of grieving need to be allowed, encouraged and taught.

II. Overview of the first 24 hours

- A. Principal verifies with local District, law enforcement, or family
- B. Decision is made by the Principal to implement the crisis action plan

- C. Building-wide notification of event using Emergency Phone Tree
- D. Notification to Director of CTE
- E. Contact Outside Support Team- to include the following:
 - a. Hospice (315) 265-3105 and/or SLP MIT team (315)541-2529 (during business hours) or (315)541-2001 (after hours)
 - b. Tech Center Counselors
- F. Emergency faculty meeting
- G. End of day faculty meeting

III. Chronology: Actions to be taken

- A. CTE Director (also see **Appendix A**)
- B. Building Principal (also see **Appendix B**)
 - a. Receives initial report
 - b. Verifies by calling police, component district or family
 - c. Calls Superintendents and Principals (District & BOCES)
 - i. Should crisis action plan be implemented?
 - ii. Should Emergency Phone Tree be initiated?
 - iii. Schedule time/place for emergency faculty meeting (prior to next school day)
 - d. Define the nature of the crisis and estimate its scope. What is likely to be the reaction to this event? Identify groups most at-risk. Begin to assign tasks.
 - e. Plan agenda for emergency faculty meeting
 - f. With family's permission, write prepared statement to be read to students by teachers (write with component district to ensure singular statement/same information)
 - g. Identify extra rooms for individual, group counseling and a "quiet room" for those who do not wish to talk
 - h. Assign an in-district and/or outside support staff to cover counseling and quiet rooms
 - i. Begin to list high risk students (and possibly faculty) who will need extra attention:
 - i. Siblings
 - ii. Cousins/relatives who attend/work in the building
 - iii. Best friends (boy or girlfriend)
 - iv. Close contacts (friends/relatives in other districts/centers)
 - v. Team/club members

- vi. “secondary grief reactions”: students who have suffered recent or multiple deaths or losses
- vii. Potentially suicidal or sad/depressed students
- viii. Students who generally have trouble coping with crisis

C. Support Staff (also see **Appendix C**)

- a. Initiates phone tree
- b. Make arrangements for floating sub
- c. Take messages for staff throughout the day

D. Counselor (also see **Appendix D**)

- a. Invite Outside Support Team to emergency faculty meeting

IV. First day Emergency Faculty Meeting (prior to student arrival)

A. Building Principal

- a. States facts concerning crisis as completely as possible, dispels rumors, reports all information known about calling hours, funeral arrangements if necessary. Answers questions and provides information to staff regarding how to handle their own grief.
- b. If the crisis happens during the day”
 - i. If a death occurs outside of the school, during the school day, the faculty and staff will be notified by a meeting after school that day.
 - ii. If school is not in session when the death occurs, the Principal will start the phone tree. This will allow the faculty and staff to have advance notice of the tragedy in the event that they will need to take personal time away from school if needed. The time and place of a special faculty meeting the next school day will be given.
 - iii. If a death occurs involving staff, the phone tree will be initiated and a meeting will be held. If needed, school may be delayed or closed.
- c. Outline plans for the day
 - i. Classes will follow normal schedule EXCEPT:
 - 1. Teachers start class by reading prepared statement and answer any student questions. Allow time for discussion of the event and feelings associated
(also see **Appendix E**)
 - a. Present facts and dispel rumors
 - b. Briefly express their own feelings (try not to hide them-model appropriate response to grief)
 - c. Postpone tests, presentations
 - d. Describe availability of usual and extra support-locations for individual and group counseling, “quiet

room” for those who prefer not to talk, and availability of Outside Support Team to come to classroom where appropriate.

- e. Assure students that any adult in the building will try to help them
 - f. Any student having difficulty coping should be sent to the Guidance Office, accompanied by another student if appropriate.
 - g. Encourage students to help each other, including escorting students to Guidance Office
 - h. Allow some ventilation of student feelings to relieve anxiety and tension
- ii. Clarify that all questions from the media should be redirected to the BOCES Superintendent
 - iii. Describe the availability of a floating sub, if any teacher needs a break or wishes to talk to Counselor/Outside Support Team. Teachers are serving as role models, it is especially important for them to ventilate to support staff they are not coping well.
 - iv. Announce an end of day staff meeting.

B. Counselor or Crisis Consultant (i.e. Hospice)

- a. Briefly addresses the kinds of grief reactions that can be expected at this age level and under circumstances of this type of death.
- b. Suggests ways teachers can best handle these responses: the do’s and don’ts
- c. Suggests ways teachers can best manage their own grief responses
- d. Review warning signs of high-risk students and kinds of grief reactions that require immediate intervention

V. During the First Day

- a. Crisis support staff meet with students who seek help and initiate contact with those identified as being at-risk.
- b. Counselor calls parents of high-risk students
- c. Counselor contacts all absent students

VI. End of First Day Staff Meeting

- a. Principal: updates information concerning death and funeral arrangements

- b. Principal/Consultant: allows staff to share experiences of the day: what went well, what did not, suggestions for Day 2.
- c. Staff: identify any students or staff members of great concern. Counselor/Outside Support Team may contact parents of these students
- d. Principal: Plan for Day 2. Determine if outside support is needed. Plan for students to attend funeral.
- e. Debrief staff/teachers/administrators on how they are doing. They may ask questions regarding how everything went during day one.

VII. Second Day of Classes

- a. Some Outside Support Team still available for meeting with students and staff, especially those considered “at-risk”
- b. Principal gives updated information to faculty and staff as appropriate
- c. Counselor calls parents of high risk students

VIII. After School Staff Meeting

- a. Share day’s experiences
- b. Counselor reports on at-risk students
- c. Report on family
- d. Discuss plans for calling hours and funeral (who is representing, who needs sub)

IX. Third Day of Classes

If the calling hours/funeral are during school hours, staff and students should be permitted to attend. To provide support to students and staff, the Principal/Counselor/Outside Support Team will attend the calling hours, and possibly the funeral. Students not attending should have a regular school day, with extra opportunities for discussion in classes as necessary or with the Counselor/Outside Support Team.

APPENDIX A

SWT CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN- CTE DIRECTOR

(Check with Building Staff to prevent duplication of tasks)

CTE Director, upon notification of a death/crisis situation, will immediately notify the Principal, who will initiate the contacting of staff.

The Superintendent (or his/her designee) will be the only spokesperson/contact person for the school district. No staff member is to speak to the media or post information/opinions on Internet sites, such as Facebook.

The Administration will communicate factual information about the situation at hand with staff, parents, and community; other staff members are not to share information other than the written statements they are asked to read or send home.

CTE Director Duties

- Verify information regarding crisis with family member or law enforcement. Ask:
What are the facts?
What information does the family want released to students and staff?
- Call Superintendent Tom Burns with facts to begin their phone tree.
- Cancel non-emergency appointments and meetings.
- Be highly visible to show presence, support and control of the situation.
- Brief clerical staff in handling calls and requests for information. Provide statements of response.
- Obtain funeral service/memorial arrangements and share with staff.
- Extend condolences to the immediate family and provide representation at services.
- Keep the Board of Education informed. BOE members may attend the after school debriefing meeting.
- Monitor intervention process.

APPENDIX B

SWT CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN- PRINCIPAL

- Receive initial report
- Verify with local District, law enforcement, or family
- Decision is made whether to implement the Crisis Response Plan
- Notify Director of CTE
- Call Superintendents and Principals (District & BOCES)
- Initiate notification of staff through phone tree
- Provide date/time/location of Emergency faculty meeting
- Provide details of End of day faculty meeting
- If TV message is necessary, Use common terminology in delaying school:
For example: “One-hour delay for students. All staff report at x:xx a.m.”

- Define the nature of the crisis and estimate its scope. What is likely to be the reaction to this event? Identify groups most at-risk. Begin to assign tasks.
- Plan agenda for emergency faculty meeting
- With family’s permission, write prepared statement to be read to students by teachers (write with component district to ensure singular statement/same information)
- Identify extra rooms for individual, group counseling and a “quiet room” for those who do not wish to talk
- Assign Counselor/Outside Support Staff to cover counseling and quiet rooms
- With Teacher/Counselor input, begin to list high risk students (and possibly faculty) who will need extra attention:
 - Siblings
 - Cousins/relatives who attend/work in the building
 - Best friends (boy or girlfriend)
 - Close contacts (friends/relatives in other districts/centers)
 - Team/club members
 - “secondary grief reactions”: students who have suffered recent or multiple deaths or losses
 - Potentially suicidal or sad/depressed students
 - Students who generally have trouble coping with crisis

- Brief clerical staff in handling calls and requests for information. Provide statements of response.

- Cancel non-emergency appointments and meetings.

- Arrange for substitute coverage for staff and floating subs
- Arrange for extra custodians to be on for the day
 - Obtain funeral service/memorial arrangements and share with staff.
- Communicate regularly throughout the day/week with the CTE Director.
- Written Statement requirements:
 - States facts concerning crisis as completely as possible, dispels rumors, reports all information known about calling hours, funeral arrangements if necessary.
 - Answers questions and provides information to staff regarding how to handle their own grief.
- Clarify that all questions from the media should be redirected to the BOCES Superintendent
- If the deceased is a student, the name must be removed from SchoolTool class lists, etc. immediately by the Guidance Office.

Initial Staff Meeting

- Share current facts of the situation.
- Distribute the student announcement (written statement for staff to read). Give specific instructions on the time and place announcement is to be made.
- Emphasize the need to stick with the facts to reduce rumors. Rumors are destructive and can be traumatizing to children.
- Encourage staff members to consult their Emergency Clipboard for resources on the grief process, common student behaviors,
- Review the plan for the day. Recommend no computer use to minimize students accessing social media sites.
 - Describe the availability of a floating sub, if any teacher needs a break or wishes to talk to Counselor/Outside Support Team. Teachers are serving as role models, it is especially important for them to ventilate to aid in their grieving.

- Remind staff to note students and staff who are at risk, including those who may have suffered a recent loss or a similar loss/crisis. Staff are to share those lists with Counselor, as soon as possible.
- If the crisis occurs during the school day, identify siblings, cousins, close friends, etc. who will need to be gathered separately to learn the news. Assign team member to share the news with them.
- Develop a plan to assist at-risk staff members in reading the announcement and navigating their day (including subs and/or other staff on standby to step in as needed).
- Develop a “plan of action” to contact parents of students in distress. Phone calls can be made by classroom teachers who feel comfortable or by Counselor/Outside Support Staff.
- Announce MANDATORY after-school debriefing meeting details.
- Be highly visible to show presence, support and control of the situation.

Debriefing Staff Meeting

- Thank the staff for doing a great job during a very challenging day.
 - Share day’s experiences
 - Report on family
 - Discuss plans for calling hours and funeral (who is representing, who needs sub)
 - Arrange for staff coverage depending upon funeral services.
- Update staff on any new facts received.
- Stress the importance self-care with staff as they are supporting others through this
- Remind staff to share lists of at-risk students with the counselors.
- Debrief regarding behaviors, observation, etc. that staff is observing, went well, what did not, suggestions for Day 2.
- Provide teachers/staff members with the “game plan” for the next day.
- Monitor Facebook activity of students/community surrounding this particular person and situation. Report back to Counselor with information.

- Plan for Day 2. Determine if outside support is needed.
- Plan “orientation session(s)” for students for the funeral/calling hours and services.

- Gauge staff on how they are doing emotionally & how successfully they feel they are meeting the grief needs of the students & their colleagues
- Some Outside Support Team will still available for meeting with students and staff, especially those considered “at-risk”
- Develop a plan for moving forward with staff and students, including the rearranging of the student’s desk, cleaning of locker, etc. Also, define dates/times to end memorials and how they will be presented to the family.

- Post “Guide for Parents” chart of navigating grief or other helpful documents for parents to the website.

- Post community resources listing of counselors and numbers to the website.

APPENDIX C

SWT CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN- SUPPORT STAFF

- Activate the full staff phone tree.

Begin with, "I am sorry to have to call with bad news."

Give the facts of the situation.

Give the details of the staff meeting:

where, when, that it is REQUIRED, and that further details will be forthcoming.

- Arrange for substitute teachers and/or floating subs, where appropriate/as needed
- CTE Director and/or Principal will brief clerical staff in handling calls and requests for information and will provide appropriate statements of response.
- Serve as parent/community liaison, taking contact information from non-essential callers (parents, vendors, community/college/business representatives). Give message "That staff member is unavailable at the present time. May I please take your name & contact information? I will deliver this info to him/her as soon as he/she is available. Thank you."
- Provide list of absent students to Counselor
- If the deceased is a student, the name must be removed from SchoolTool class lists, etc. immediately by the guidance office.
- Arrange for staff coverage depending upon funeral services.

APPENDIX D

SWT CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN - COUNSELOR

- Contact Outside Support Team with facts of crisis incident
 - Request to attend emergency faculty meeting and provide support throughout the day:
 - Hospice (315) 265-3105 and/or
 - SLP MIT team (315)541-2529 (during business hours) or (315)541-2001 (after hours)
 - Tech Center Counselors
- Contact District counselors to share facts of crisis situation. Determine connections with other surrounding districts. Notify district counselors, as needed.
- Identify students and staff at-risk in this particular crisis. Divide the list of at-risk students among Principal/Teachers/Outside Support Team for periodic check-in with those students
- If the crisis occurs during the school day, identify siblings, cousins, close friends, etc. who will need to be gathered separately to learn the news. Assign team member to share the news with them.
- Develop a plan to assist at-risk staff members in reading the announcement and navigating their day (including subs and/or other staff on standby to step in as needed).
- During staff meeting,
 - briefly address the kinds of grief reactions that can be expected at this age level/under circumstances of this type of death.
 - Suggest ways teachers can best handle these responses: the do's and don'ts
 - Suggest ways teachers can best manage their own grief responses
 - Review warning signs of high-risk students and kinds of grief reactions that require immediate intervention
- Throughout day:
 - meet with students who seek help and initiate contact with those identified as being at-risk.
 - call parents of high-risk students
 - contact all absent students
 - contact all absent students
 - report on at-risk students

- Develop a “plan of action” to contact parents of students in distress. Phone calls can be made by classroom teachers who feel comfortable or by crisis team members.
- Plan “orientation session(s)” for students for the funeral/calling hours and services.
- If the deceased is a student, the name must be removed from SchoolTool class lists, etc. immediately by the guidance office.

APPENDIX E

SWT CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN - SWT TEACHERS

- Determine & notify Counselor of close friend connections within tech center and students from other surrounding districts. Counselor/Outside Support Team may contact parents of these students
- Classes will follow normal schedule EXCEPT:
 - start class by reading prepared statement and answer any student questions
 - Allow time for discussion of the event and feelings associated
 - Present facts and dispel rumors
 - Briefly express their own feelings (try not to hide them-model appropriate response to grief)
 - Postpone tests, presentations
- Describe to students the availability of grief support-
 - locations for individual and group counseling,
 - “quiet room” for those who prefer not to talk (activities available)
 - availability of Outside Support Team to come to classroom where appropriate.
- Assure students that any adult in the building will try to help them
- Any student having difficulty coping should be sent to the Guidance Office, accompanied by another student if appropriate.
- Encourage students to help each other, including escorting students to Guidance Office
- Allow some ventilation of student feelings to relieve anxiety and tension
- Inform Principal or Counselor of any staff member of concern
- Develop a “plan of action” to contact parents of students in distress. Phone calls can be made by classroom teachers who feel comfortable or by Counselor/Outside Support Staff.
- Plan “orientation session” for students regarding the funeral/calling hours and services.

Appendix F:

SWT CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN- Contact Phone Numbers

Name	Position	Ext. #	Cell Phone (315)
	Maintenance		
	Culinary Arts Teacher		
	Building Trades TA		
	Special Ed. Consultant		
	Guidance Secretary		
	Cosmetology Teacher		
	Auto Tech Teacher		
	Metalworking Teacher		
	Principal		
	Maintenance		
	Criminal Justice Teacher		
	Culinary 1:1 TA		
	Maintenance		
	Tech Support		
	CREATE Teacher		
	Math Consultant		
	Allied Health Teacher		
	Graphics Comm. Teacher		
	Health Careers TA		
	Building Trades Teacher		
	Guidance Counselor		

