

FeedbackReport

Focusing Your Time

Midway thru the school year, during a lull between holidays, you sense that the recent demands on your time may be detracting from your desired focus. You know how easy it is to let the urgent overrun the important, so you decide to make some time to refocus. You arrive at your office a bit early so that you can go through your routine (which consists primarily of reading and responding to emails) and have a little extra time to consider priorities for the use of your time for the remainder of the year. As you respond to your last email, you shift your attention to the demands on your time. For the remainder of this school year, in which areas will you focus the use of your discretionary time? **(You may only select two or less.)**

Your choice

- A. Improving community relations.
- B. Improving school safety / security.

Other choice(s)

- Supporting / Improving teacher performance.
- Become more involved with the disciplinary processes.
- Enhance communication between students and faculty.

Choice feedback

- A. Having a positive working relationship with the community in which your school resides provides you with much more latitude when dealing with weighty issues like suicide. Waiting until such issues occur to focus on community relationships is a major error. Your choice at the beginning of the school year to focus discretionary time on community relations was a very good choice.
 - Prioritization: +200 %
 - Community: +200 %
- B. This is a worthwhile effort, but should probably not be pursued at the expense of community relations. Finding a way to do this while positively impacting community relations is an excellent approach.
 - Community: +160 %

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Visit from the SRO

In the middle of your personal planning session, there is a knock on your door and the school resource officer (SRO) enters. He shares that he has just received a report that the home of one of our students is the location of a shooting to which other officers are currently responding. As yet, there are no details. You thank him for the information. What do you do next?

Your choice

- Wait for more information.

Other choice(s)

- Call a meeting with key staff.
- Meet with the Director of Guidance.

Choice feedback

- Communication is critical during times of crisis. Perhaps the most common error made is to hoard information. As crises occur, the first question you should always ask yourself is "who needs this information and when do they need it?" Your choice to wait has serious impacts. Waiting will leave certain members of your staff unprepared. It will also allow social media and other informal networks to spread misinformation, making your job more complex. This was not the best choice in this situation.
 - Timing: +20 %

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Next Steps

You decide that now you have sufficient detail to begin alerting others in the school. You decide to call a meeting. The day is already in full swing and you find it difficult, without drawing undue attention to this unfolding situation, to get all of the individuals you need to inform in one place and at one time, so you begin the arduous task of finding them one at a time. As you travel the halls you overhear students already discussing what they have heard thru social media. You worry that you may have lost your window to get in front of this. What will you do now?

Your choice

- Use the Intercom system to call a meeting.

Other choice(s)

- Make an announcement of the death.
- Focus your efforts on Guidance Counselors.

Choice feedback

- Making initial decisions is usually best done with a small group that can later in their implementation. Your decision to forego a meeting and strike out on your own will have broad negative consequences.
 - Staff: +20 %
 - Audience: +10 %
 - Student: +20 %
 - Timing: +50 %

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Moving to Action

Upon confirmation that a student has died, you move to action. In the space provided below, list the first three things you would do. **List them in priority order** (1 for the first thing, 2 for the second thing, and 3 for the third.)

Your input...

1. Immediate Crisis Response: Gather information, mobilize a crisis team, and designate a space for services. 2. Communication with School Community: Coordinate with team in creating an empathetic statement and communicate resources available. 3. Work with student leaders: to discuss concerns and emotions.

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Advantage of a Crisis Plan / Team

Generally, what are some of the elements of your District Crisis Plan / Team? List key elements of your protocol in the space below.

Considerations...

Some advantages include: - Pre-Planned communications - Pre-Determined district level assistance and points of contact - Possible checklist of things to do and not do - Assistance in dealing with sensitive community issues - Potential community based assistance (counseling, family support, etc.)

Your input...

1. Formation: Roles and responsibilities. 2. Communication Protocols: Communication chains and contact information including how to address the media. 3. Training: Scheduled and unscheduled drills. 4. Documentation: Guidelines and procedures. 5. Community Partnerships 6. Support: Procedures for support 7. Post Crisis Evaluation

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Move to Action

You determine that it's time to move to action. Which of the following things would you do first?

Your choice

- Speak with Guidance Counselors and administrators.

Other choice(s)

- Prepare for and schedule an internal announcement.
- Send Leadership Team out to spread the message.
- Personally inform each of John's teachers.
- Call an emergency meeting of the school Leadership Team.
- Draft a phone and email notification.

Choice feedback

- This is an excellent first step. Beginning here allows counselors to coordinate and prepare to support students and staff as they deal with this issue.
 - One: +1
 - 1: +1
 - Prioritization: +100 %

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Move to Action

Which of the remaining things will you do next?

Your choice

- Call an emergency meeting of the school Leadership Team.

Other choice(s)

- Prepare for and schedule an internal announcement.
- Send Leadership Team out to spread the message.
- Speak with Guidance Counselors and administrators.
- Personally inform each of John's teachers.
- Draft a phone and email notification.

Choice feedback

- This is an excellent second step. Once Guidance Counselor preparation is underway, a meeting of the school leadership team is a means of crafting a consistent message and creating a plan with commitment to it.
 - 2: +1
 - Staff: +80 %
 - Prioritization: +100 %
 - Two: +2

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Move to Action

Which of the remaining things will you do next?

Your choice

- Prepare for and schedule an internal announcement.

Other choice(s)

- Send Leadership Team out to spread the message.
- Speak with Guidance Counselors and administrators.
- Personally inform each of John's teachers.
- Call an emergency meeting of the school Leadership Team.
- Draft a phone and email notification.

Choice feedback

- This is the best thing to do last. Once you have crafted the message for key individuals, it's time to decide how and when to make a school-wide announcement. Dealing with all of the other issues first will have provided you with most of what you need to make this important announcement.
 - Prioritization: +20 %
 - Staff: +50 %
 - Six: +3
 - 6: +1
 - Student: +50 %

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Move to Action

Which of the remaining things will you do next? (Are you beginning to see a pattern here?)

Your choice

- Personally inform each of John's teachers.

Other choice(s)

- Prepare for and schedule an internal announcement.
- Send Leadership Team out to spread the message.
- Speak with Guidance Counselors and administrators.
- Call an emergency meeting of the school Leadership Team.
- Draft a phone and email notification.

Choice feedback

- This is an excellent fourth step. John's teachers should be given the message personally by you the principal. This will allow them time to deal with their emotions and quickly prepare to help students that probably knew John best.
 - Prioritization: +100 %
 - Four: +4
 - 4: +1

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Move to Action

OK, just one more to go.

Your choice

- Draft a phone and email notification.

Other choice(s)

- Prepare for and schedule an internal announcement.
- Send Leadership Team out to spread the message.
- Speak with Guidance Counselors and administrators.
- Personally inform each of John's teachers.
- Call an emergency meeting of the school Leadership Team.

Choice feedback

- This is an excellent 5th thing to do. There is more urgency in dealing with students than in dealing with the community, so once communication with students is initiated, you can spend time crafting a phone and email message for the community.
 - Five: +5
 - 5: +1
 - Prioritization: +100 %
 - Community: +100 %

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The Announcement - Timing

You know that this announcement will be a major interruption and have a ripple effect that envelopes both school and community. When will you make the announcement?

Your choice

- Immediately.

Other choice(s)

- Just before lunch.
- During the lunch hour.
- Just before the end of the day.

Choice feedback

- Timing is important during any crisis. The timing of information release can either work to your advantage or your disadvantage. In the past, prior to social media, the school would have been the first and best source of information. So waiting to deploy information until you have somewhat complete and accurate information was wise. Today, you must find a balance between urgency and accuracy. Waiting too long allows misinformation and speculation to grow. Not waiting sufficiently long risks dissemination of partial or inaccurate information. Your decision to make the announcement immediately (mid-day) was probably not the best. This may result in frustration in many students who will want to speak with friends, etc. Waiting until just before lunch may have been better timing.
 - Timing: +20 %

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The Announcement - Content

You realize the importance of the content and tone of your message. Which of the following should be part of your announcement?

Your choice

- A. Express your sorrow.
- B. Acknowledge their sorrow.
- C. Explain how to get support.

Other choice(s)

- Share the exact same message that was shared with the staff.
- Address the question of suicide.
- Encourage them to wait for accurate information.
- Take an impersonal tone.
- Ask them to honor John by not engaging in speculation.

Choice feedback

- A. The content and delivery of this message to the student body is critical. Your goal should be to share your sorrow, acknowledge theirs, provide resources for dealing with their emotions and encourage them not to engage in speculation or misinformation. Your choice to express your sorrow is excellent.
 - Community: +200 %
 - Content: +1
 - Staff: +100 %
 - Student: +100 %
- B. The content and delivery of this message to the student body is critical. Your goal should be to share your sorrow, acknowledge theirs, provide resources for dealing with their emotions and encourage them not to engage in speculation or misinformation. Your choice to acknowledge their sorrow is excellent.
 - Student: +100 %
 - Staff: +100 %
 - Content: +1
- C. The content and delivery of this message to the student body is critical. Your goal should be to share your sorrow, acknowledge theirs, provide resources for dealing with their emotions and encourage them not to engage in speculation or misinformation. Your choice to explain how to access support is excellent.
 - Content: +1
 - Student: +100 %
 - Staff: +100 %

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Other Potential Issues

In the space below, list others issues you might face:

Your input...

1. Managing grief and emotional responses.
2. Stigmatization.
3. Preventing similar copycat behavior.
4. Balancing privacy.
5. Engaging parents or guardians.
6. Community perceptions.