

Communications During a Crisis

During a crisis situation the District Crisis Response Team convenes to provide support to school(s) experiencing a crisis. The first task for this team is to gather relevant, *accurate* information about the incident: when it started, who is involved, who is directly affected, and the extent of damage or injuries. During the first few minutes of a crisis, information may be inaccurate or may change suddenly as the true nature of the crisis unfolds.

Communication with the public is a shared responsibility between the school, the school district, and with the Public Safety Agency that has responded to the crisis when that need occurs. The District Crisis Response Team takes the lead for communications in most cases, but often relies on the school to help determine the most effective ways to communicate. The district website, email communication, written communication in the form of a letter home sent with students, and recorded message phone calls are the methods most frequently employed.

Typically, the ***first communication*** regarding a particular crisis is posted on the Boulder Valley School District website, a communication that provides a brief summary of what *effects* the crisis may have on a school or a group of schools. This message is crafted and posted as quickly as possible. An example might read: "Acting on information from the Lafayette Police Department regarding a developing situation at the Shopping Center at South Boulder Road and HWY 287, several schools are currently in LOCK-OUT. Those schools include Sanchez Elementary, Angevine Middle School and Centaurus High School."

In situations that may ***affect the routines of parents and students***, a recorded message telephone call is often utilized to get the message to the affected people in a timely way. An example of such a message might be: "Due to a water main break at Douglass Elementary School this afternoon, the school will be closed tonight and tomorrow." BVSD contracts with its own emergency notification system, which enables the district to send these phone calls to specific school audiences. Email is often sent as a redundant communication to ensure the messages have been received.

As more information becomes available, the website will be updated. Email sent through the BVSD Infinite Campus system may also be used, and a letter explaining a situation may be sent home with students.

It is important for parents to be sure the information in the BVSD Infinite Campus system is updated to reflect the most current email addresses and telephone numbers. Our email notification system and our reverse 911 calling system rely on the data in Infinite Campus to provide accurate and timely communications. Click on this link to check or update your student's information:

<http://portal.bvdsd.org/campus/portal/boulder.jsp>