

Administrators

Category : School Crisis Plans

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Text Messaging Is Not The Ultimate Solution and NIMS is Not a Substitute for a Crisis Communications Plan High tech tools are only one of the tools you need. You **MUST** have a **CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN. NIMS Federal Programs are not the same as having a Crisis Communications Plan. NIMS plans coordinate communications with and between emergency responders and governments, but they do not provide you with the tools, skills and directions to talk with the media, your students, your parents, your faculty and other key audiences.**

A crisis communications plan tells you when to use your text messaging, e-mails, web postings and other tools. It also contains pre-written, pre-approved key messages for the media, students, faculty, parents and other key audiences. If your NIMS plan is activated, you would then also have to activate your crisis communications plan. Furthermore, a crisis communications plan may be used to communicate events that require no emergency response, such as a scandal involving administrators, faculty, students or staff. Pre-approved message templates written as part of a crisis communications plan eliminate the lost time spent trying to formulate news releases from scratch, when adrenaline is flowing and emotions are running high in the middle of a crisis. To control the flow of accurate, honest information, you must be communicating simultaneously with all of your audiences within **ONE HOUR**. If you fail to communicate within the first hour your audiences will perceive that you are either hiding the truth, that you are incompetent, or both. You must also remember that all of your employees, students and parents are on their cell phones and using text messaging to tell the world what is going on from their perspective. They may be spreading rumors. They are likely sending photos and video clips to CNN, Fox and other media outlets. Hence, the world is hearing their side of the story without hearing your official side of the story. Also remember that in many emergencies the electricity is out, rendering your high tech tools useless. Your **CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN** must still be functional when the lights are out. The Braud plan works even when you are left in the dark. WE CAN PROVIDE YOU WITH THE HIGH TECH TOOLS THAT YOU NEED, but it is just one part of the equation.