

# CRISIS/ISSUES COMMUNICATIONS BULLYING/ CYBERBULLYING



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LAURA BISHOP  
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STRATEGIC. SMART. SAVVY.

Presented in conjunction with  
Central Regional  
School District



# WHO WE ARE

## LAURA BISHOP COMMUNICATIONS

- New Jersey's Premier School Communications Firm
- 40+ clients
- 20 employees
- 35+ years experience in schools
- Other clients include nonprofits, municipalities and businesses



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# WHO WE ARE



Allyson Roberts  
Vice President

Laura Bishop Communications



Laura Bishop  
Managing Principal

Laura Bishop Communications



# WHO WE ARE



## Central Regional School District

- Six-year comprehensive regional school
- Located in Bayville, NJ
- NJ School Choice District
- Committed to providing a comprehensive and enriching learning environment
- Focus on school climate and parental and community support and understanding



# WHO WE ARE



Dr. CarneyRay Yoder  
(Dr. CRY)  
Superintendent  
Central Regional School District

- Superintendent of CRSD since January 1, 2024
- Previously served as Somers Point School District Superintendent
- Atlantic County Superintendent of the Year – 2022

Contributions by  
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# ACT BEFORE BULLYING IS A PROBLEM



- Assemble trusted legal and communications teams.
- Establish roles and designate spokesperson in times of crises.
- Communicate HIB policies, resources, contacts beyond what's mandated.
- Educate parents about bullying vs. conflict; Ask for their help curbing both.

Go Beyond: Work to foster a culture of pride and positivity every day!

# MAKE A PLAN W/ PARAMETERS FOR CYBERBULLYING

- Know that cyberbullying is a form of bullying; it must fit the state definition.
- Consult with legal about limitations of disciplining for off-campus conduct.
- Proactively educate students on digital citizenship and conflict resolution.

Go Beyond: Continue prioritizing parents in your communications!



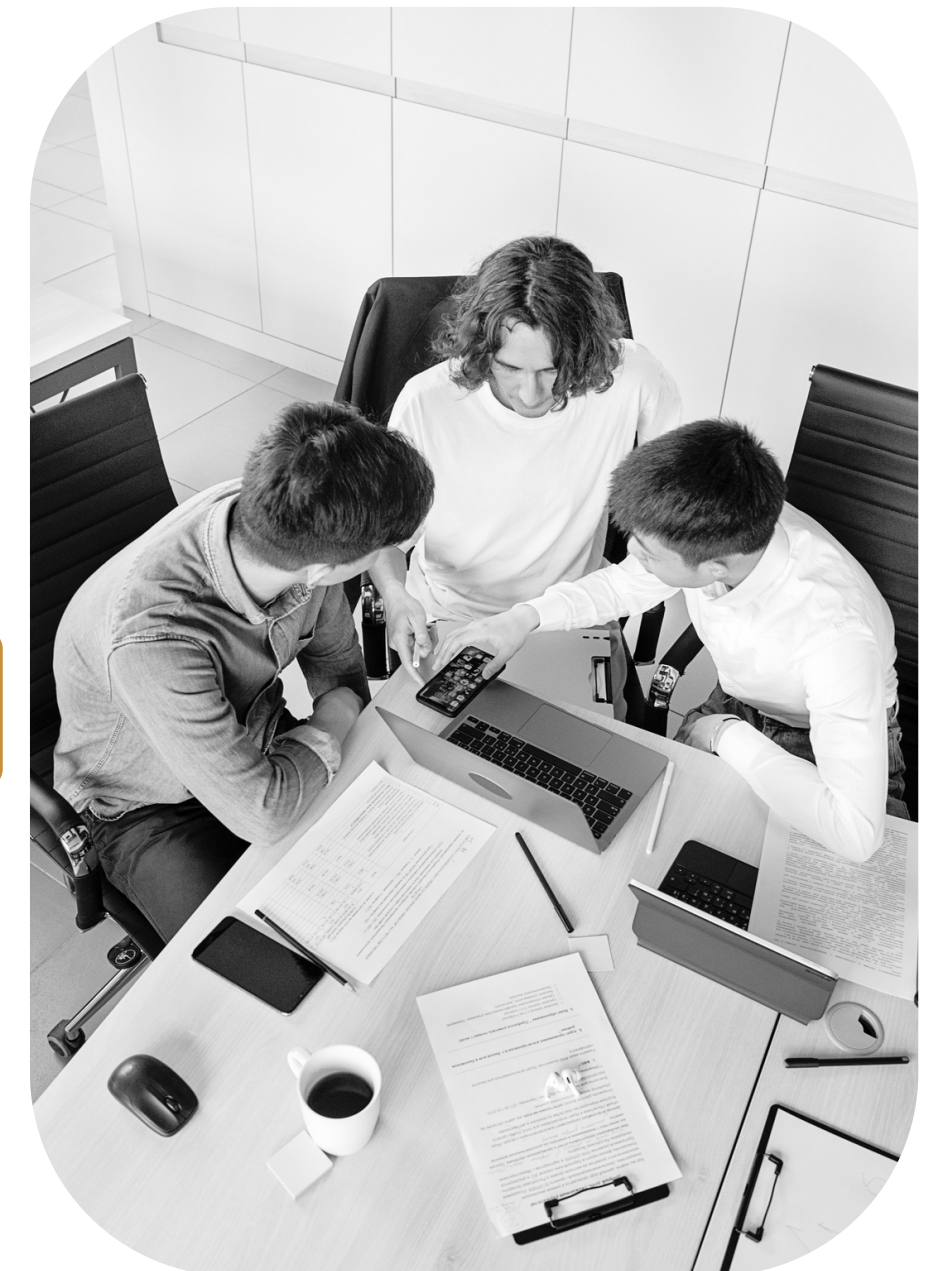
# PRE-PLAN FOR CRISIS RESPONSE

## WHO WILL BE AT THE TABLE?

- What are their roles?
- Do they have the tools they need?
- Who are their backups?
- Have you established contacts with outside agencies?
- What sub-teams do you need based on the issue/crisis?

## WHAT ARE YOUR COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS?

- What are the login credentials?
- Who is responsible for each one?
- Can these be accessed off-site, or in the midst of a cyberattack?





# PRE-PLAN FOR QUICK COMMS

## WRITE IN ADVANCE

- Think of high probability cases.
- Draft notifications: Parent message, holding statement, etc.

## ID ALL POSSIBLE AUDIENCES

- BOE, staff, parents, media ...
- They may not get the same message; they may not get messages in the same order.



## LESS OBVIOUS:

Make sure anyone who answers your phones is trained.

# WHEN BULLYING BECOMES AN ISSUE OR CRISIS:

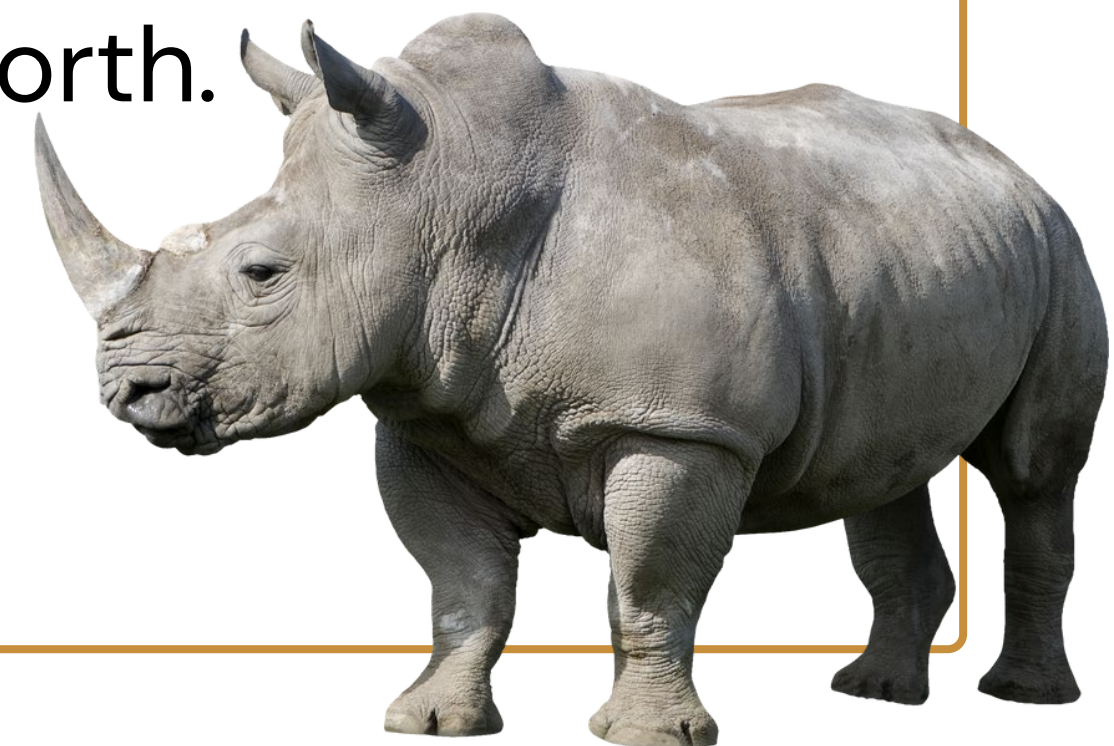


- Alert/assemble your team.
- Be proactive to take control; issue a holding statement, if necessary.
- Gather the facts.
- Outline key messages.
- Designate the superintendent as the spokesperson.
- Prioritize your audiences; Make sure BOE and superintendent are aware and agree.

# NOW: COMMUNICATE!

- Understand this will be hard; put your ego aside.
- Share facts (only what's confirmed and within legal constraints); do not speculate nor offer opinions.
- Show compassion in your words and your delivery.
- Don't forget your internal audiences; make sure they hear from you and feel supported.
- Stick to your statement(s); avoid a back and forth.
- Monitor chatter and correct misinformation.

Warning: You might need another layer of thick skin!



# PREPARE FOR MEDIA ATTENTION

- Offer pre-written messaging (i.e. parent letters) in lieu of a statement to ensure consistency.
- Designate one e-mail address for reporter questions; Consult legal and communications to determine which ones warrant a response.
- Understand **NOTHING** is off the record!
- Prepare to lose in the court of public opinion.
- Take your blows to move on quickly.



# KNOW TRAGEDIES REQUIRE MORE THOUGHT AND TIME

- Initiate a trauma-informed response; Call in external supports.
- Keep checking on your people!
- Know key dates (i.e. anniversaries) and prepare.
- Be conscious of the words you use to communicate what happened; Prevent copycat behavior.
- Review and consider pausing regularly scheduled content.
- Consider assigning a point person to deal with those most impacted; Take them out of mass notifications.



# 6 CS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Concern

Confidence

Clarity

Commitment

Control

Collaboration



# END WITH A DEBRIEF



WHAT DID YOU LEARN? WHAT  
CAN YOU TEACH US?



# CONTACT US!

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