The TIG Network is uniquely positioned to support coping and recovery. The current context of the global pandemic is unprecedented, leading some of us to experience feeling a lack confidence in skills or knowledge to apply; being frozen or unsure of our actions. This is uncharted territory, however, what we know about crisis response can be applied with thoughtful planning to meet needs in the current context.

Extending Best Practices
Guidance for TIG Leaders in Response to a Major Incident: Communication

Communication will be different. Inform staff and stakeholders of your process for communication. Some aspects may be typical and familiar, and others may be new in response to the current context. Use this document to guide thinking and discussions with your Crisis Team to consider what information to frontload and manage expectations. Remember to include when/how updates will be shared.

In Typical TIG Circumstances	Considerations for Current Context
School communicates information	- Communication is driven by needs of the moment - Communication is chunked for better understanding during times of stress - Shift to virtual platforms - Capitalize on unique expertise; what can school offer stakeholders that is unique or important in current crisis. This may include: - Instruction - SEL - Resilience and recovery - TIG
School provides access to resources	- Share details of resources available at school (ie food, transportation or childcare services) - Links/contacts to community-based resources - Links to other sources of credible information - Templates, schedules and routines for home time
School communicates around losses that impact their building or district	- Communication may be modified. - Please see additional information below that may help guide your strategy.
School staff triage needs for support, provide ongoing monitoring and interventions in-person	- Empower parents/caregivers to play this role through the sharing of guidance, tips, and tools: - Actions to promote hope and resilience - Identifying normal reactions to trauma or grief for all stakeholders - Positive coping and communication - Ability to access appropriate school staff for questions or concerns

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	• Leverage ongoing communication via phone or virtual technologies to identify where additional intervention is needed. • Support community-based referrals where needed
School is identified as centralized and necessary partner in communication	• Recognize that with school not being in session students, families or staff may not communicate important news • Other resources and supports may emerge as more essential for the duration of school closure
Communication is more frequent and in-person	• Loss of in-person, daily communication necessitates careful consideration of what we can communicate safely and strategies we employ.

Communication Tools and Types

- **Crisis Management Briefing(s):** CMB's are appropriate for heterogeneous audiences of any size. The information shared should be meaningful and appropriate to all. CMB goals are to decrease fear and increase safety by sharing timely information and action steps.
    - Can be delivered virtually (Recorded video, streaming video, District-wide messaging services)
    - May be repeated as frequently as there is new and important information to share
    - Brainstorm what questions stakeholder groups are seeking. Information and instructions should be shared by experts credible in each topic area.
    - TIG Trained staff are certified in this intervention and can provide guidance to structure and deliver a CMB appropriately.

- **Community Connection:** Leverage virtual technologies for students and staff to stay connected relationally. Create opportunities for staff to connect with one another. Not only will this provide the environment to support resiliency, it also allows natural monitoring of any staff or students who may need additional support.

- **Employ the Circles of Impact.** Crisis communication requires accuracy and transparency. Not every individual needs the same information. Applying the Circles of Impact framework allows each stakeholder group to be considered in both relation to the crisis *and* in relation to their current roles and responsibilities within the crisis. As you identify unique individuals or groups, modify the content and mode of delivery as appropriate to their needs.

Develop a Communication Strategy. Work with your team to identify needs for information. Revisit throughout the crisis to address new needs as they emerge. Initially, they may include:

- Where to find resources
- Digital learning routines and expectations
- Where to go for questions or more help
- How to get along at home

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- o How parents can help children
- o Managing notifications of illness or death
- o Ongoing self-care and stress management
- o Hope

- **A modified 5 T Model might assist you.** By mapping your identified needs, tools and resources, you find you can combine or reinforce communication in new ways.
  - o **T**heme – Topic of information that needs to be shared.
  - o **T**arget – Who is the audience? Is it a heterogeneous or homogeneous group?
  - o **T**ype – What method of communicating is appropriate? (CMB, website post, email, phone tree etc.)
  - o **T**iming – When and how often is information shared?
  - o **T**eam – Who will provide information and are experts needed?

- **Communication about Infection/Illness*:** TIG typically promotes engagement and communication around chronic or acute illnesses that impact the school community. Current considerations should include:
  - o Public Health and local Health Management efforts will assume the role of communicating risk related to exposure.
  - o Recommend that schools will not be communicating individual health status outside of cooperation with these entities. Refer concerned families or staff to County Public Health resources.
  - o Provide evidence of hope grounded in facts related to recovery from illness.

- **Communication about Loss*:** While school is on hiatus, familial, relational or community networks will likely assume the role of sharing that a loss has occurred. This may be a change from what is typical when losses have impacted your district before.
  - o Recognize you may play a more limited but critical role in support and recovery in the interim. A planned response can be enhanced with return to school.
  - o Determine what role in communication loss/losses your district will play. Consider and discuss:
    - Do you have an appropriate infrastructure?
    - Does it allow you to reach individuals or groups based on your Circle of Impact planning?
    - Are you able to effectively monitor for and be responsive to signs of significant distress?
    - What supports can be promoted and/or delivered?
    - Are there opportunities for staff to come together virtually in support of one another?
    - Is it sustainable if multiple losses occur? Challenge your team to consider this scenario for risks vs. protections of delivering multiple messages.

*More guidance will be forthcoming on delivering supports to impacted students and staff.

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