

Helping School Administrators Handle Death

Scott Poland, president of the National Association of School Psychologists and coauthor of *Coping With Crisis: Lessons Learned*, offers the following suggestions for school administrators:

- Verify the facts by contacting reliable sources, such as police or a close family member.
- Notify all students' families by utilizing a school calling tree.
- Hand-deliver a memorandum to each faculty member detailing the facts if the death occurs while school is in session.
- Include in the memorandum suggestions on how faculty can assist students.
- Do not underestimate the impact of the death(s) on students and other faculty.
- Provide school staff an opportunity to work through the issues (both emotionally and logistically) with other staff members.
- Hold a meeting with faculty and parents, since they are in the best position to help the children.
- Appoint a media liaison who will direct both the containment of the media (such as not allowing them onto the school campus during and immediately following the crisis) and cooperation with the media by providing them the information they will need to do their story.

From http://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/admin/admin198.shtml