



THE Head's LETTER

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It's Summer, and You Have A Reading List Too

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Summer is a great opportunity to do some reading, specifically some list reading. The Jane Group recommends that you review and update each of the important contact lists your school may need in a crisis. While this summer reading may not be as enjoyable or interesting as the lists given to your students, it's just as important. Use unscheduled time in June, July, or August to take a hard look at each of the lists and make sure they are complete and up-to-date. Should a crisis arise, you cannot afford to spend precious hours—or worse, days—getting the lists current.

A key component and a best practice in crisis management is to have the following lists in place.

- **Board members:** Include all their current phone numbers (home, business, cell, and vacation home); email addresses; and physical addresses (home, business, and vacation home).
- **Crisis team phone list:** Immediate access to the team is critical in any crisis.
- **School attorney:** Make sure you have all their numbers at the ready.
- **Faculty and staff:** You should have all the necessary contact information in case an emergency meeting must be called during the summer.
- **Vendor list:** Include insurance vendor and who to contact should you need to put the liability carrier on notice

(especially important if your CFO or someone else typically handles the insurance relationship).

- **Outside resources:** Think about the many types of possible crises and who you might need to call on—security services, counselors or psychologists, forensic accountants, IT experts, experts in the areas of sexual misconduct, LGBTQ issues, bullying, and crisis communications experts.
- **Parent list:** If you need to quickly communicate with your school community, are you confident that you have complete and current contact information for all parents?
- **Alumni and major donor list:** You may need to reach out.
- **Local and national media contacts:** Do you know who covers the education desk in each of the media outlets? Do you know who is friendly toward your school? Do you know how to reach them after hours—cell phone, in addition to office number and email?

Including this review of lists in your summer reading will help ensure that you can hit the ground running should your school find itself facing a crisis situation.

The Jane Group, based in Chicago, is a crisis communications consulting firm that works with independent schools around the world; they can be reached at 630-325-2509; thejanegroup.biz.