

## **Communication Considerations**

### **January 13, 2003**

- Make sure that all information you share with the media and your various publics is factual, straightforward, and consistent. Stick to the facts. Don't get ahead of them.
- Carefully read the talking points provided, individualize the information to your circumstances, and gather the suggested resources immediately to have on hand.
- If contacted by the media, hold the interview in an active program location. Let them see firsthand the student- and teacher-driven activities that are taking place in your building.
- Prepare media packets (include facts, figures, program information about your ISD) to share with the media when contacted.
- Always remain positive. This is an opportunity to provide great clarity about what your ISD does and whom you serve.
- If the media uses negative language, do not repeat it in your response. If a negative question is asked, "bridge" your response to the message you want to convey.
- Make sure board members and appropriate ISD staff have talking points so that everyone is communicating the same message.
- Be proactive with staff, board members, local districts, and legislators. Invite local legislators to your facilities and build your relationship on an ongoing basis.
- You may want to share the following message with your staff.  
"You may have seen recent media coverage about an investigation of the Oakland Schools (ISD) superintendent. The events at Oakland Schools are not associated with our ISD. But, as a result, legislators and the media are now asking questions about how ISDs do business. We are monitoring the situation and are working to help our legislators and media understand how ISDs function and the essential role we play in Michigan's educational system. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the superintendent's office."