

Lessons Learned in a Crisis Situation:
The Joplin Schools' Story

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Abstract

Natural disasters affect millions of lives each year, devastating educational institutions across the world (United States Agency for International Development, 2010). This qualitative study was designed using a case-study approach to understand one school district's leadership response to a catastrophic crisis in order to gain lessons learned that could prepare other non-profit, public educational institutions in a future crisis. The study, using the framework of Bolman and Deal (2008), identified specific areas within each of the four frames: structural, human resource, political, and symbolic, that should be considered when responding to a major disaster first-hand. The findings include several lessons learned that may guide other leaders in responding to a crisis.

Keywords: case study, crisis, crisis response, Bolman and Deal framework, qualitative