

Memorial for Deceased Students and Staff

DEFINITIONS

Temporary Memorials: Short term, can be given away as a gift or donation. Examples include: message on a poster/banner, artwork, memory book, writing an individual or group letter, candlelight vigil, short term memorial site (collection of balloons, flowers, stuffed animals, and photos).

Commemorative Events and/or Items: Recognition at an event or an event in honor of the deceased, as initiated by students. Examples include: positive campaigns such as acts of kindness, awareness campaigns, balloon release, sports/club recognition, student led prayer.

Living Memorials: A memorial event, sponsorship, scholarships, or items with educational significance that honor the student/staff member. It is recommended that commemorative events utilize community partners (e.g., employers of the deceased, faith communities, etc.). Activities cannot be held during the school day, and advertisement of events must occur outside the school day.

Permanent Memorials: A permanent marker or structure commemorating the deceased. Examples include: monument, permanent artwork, engraved stone or brick, permanent plaques, trees, shrubs, gardens, benches, dedication of a space (e.g. library, gym, field), pages in a yearbook, parking space or marker in the parking lot, memorials on desks or lockers.

Crisis Response Team (CRT): An appointed group of staff members who develop and execute District-wide procedures for the handling of mental health needs in the recovery phase of a crisis situation needing grief support. District and school level crisis response team members will come to an agreement for memorials. Example members: school psychologist, school counselor, principal, superintendent, public relations, family resource/youth service center director.

Crisis: Any natural disaster or unexpected event that negatively affects a student, a staff member or a significant group of the school population and usually involves serious emotional, psychological and/or physical injury or death.

Impact: The magnitude of the potential loss or seriousness of the crisis.

GENERAL STATEMENT

In recognition that schools are designed primarily to support learning, school sites should not serve as the main venue for the memorializing of students or staff. Memorial activities expressed at school need to be coordinated and approved through the Crisis Response Team (CRT), as well as building administration. The CRT will assist families and students in selecting memorial activities that are appropriate for school and assist students and staff in healthy bereavement. It is further recognized that building administration should have a certain amount of discretion in these situations to make professional judgments -- in consultation with the Superintendent and CRT -- to best meet the overall needs of students, staff, parents and the community as a whole.

MEMORIALS

Temporary memorials, as approved by the Crisis Response Team, may be displayed within the school building or on school grounds until the day of the funeral, or within one (1) week following the death, whichever comes first. The place of the temporary memorial display will be approved by the Crisis Response Team and school administrators. After the memorial is removed, the items will be given to the family by designated District officials.

Memorial for Deceased Students and Staff**MEMORIALS (CONTINUED)**

Allowable temporary memorials are referenced in the definition above or can be approved by the Crisis Response Team. Temporary memorials cannot alter District-owned property, including lockers and desks. All temporary memorial activities must occur under the direct supervision of the Crisis Response Team members. Memorials may not include the retirement, alteration, or discontinued use of school property.

Other recommended memorial activities include:

Commemorative Events and/or Items: Recognition at an event or an event in honor of the deceased, as initiated by students. Activities cannot be held during the school day, and may be sponsored by a class, club, or activity in which the deceased student or staff member participated. Advertisement of events must occur outside the school day. Event is to be held within the school year of the student/staff's death. Any items related to the commemorative event will be given to the family at the conclusion of the event, by designated District officials. Examples include: positive campaigns such as acts of kindness, awareness campaigns, sports/club recognition, student led prayer. In a situation where informal events or gatherings such as a candlelight vigil, etc., which are not school sponsored, occur on District grounds, it is requested that the school administration be notified.

Graduation Recognition: The graduation ceremony is reserved for the celebration of scholastic achievement and the anticipation of future opportunities available to all of the graduates of Spencer County Schools. One (1) vase of white flowers with blue and gold colors, with a marker that states, "Class of (year) remembers," representing all deceased members of a graduating class and any staff members will be present. Todd

If the student earned their high school diploma prior to death, and their name will be in the final printed version of the program, their name will not be read aloud. Students and family members will be informed of the name in the program prior to the graduation ceremony.

Approved existing memorials established prior to the implementation of this policy will remain intact. Existing memorials are generally the sole responsibility of the entity providing the memorial; District staff and/or finances may only be used to maintain current memorials as part of regular maintenance processes and/or to ensure safe conditions. The District reserves the right to remove a memorial if it is not or cannot be maintained or is contrary to the overall wellbeing of students.

PROHIBITED MEMORIAL ACTIVITIES

Permanent memorials at any school affiliated locations is prohibited. Selling and/or fundraising of memorial items during the school day is prohibited. District student activity accounts cannot be used to support, finance, or fundraise for memorialization. Proceeds from District co-curricular events or contests cannot be donated to agencies for memorialization. Utilizing formal all-school or school-wide events, including commencement, homecoming festivities, prom, sporting events, assemblies, and other thematic events or weeks to memorialize deceased students or staff is prohibited. Commemorative items or events can be sponsored by community-based agencies and promoted outside the school day.

School signage, intercom, and/or parent/school wide notification system will not be used to post messages about the deceased student or staff member.

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PROHIBITED MEMORIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

District facilities are designed to support learning; therefore, changes to facilities that interfere with that purpose or detract from the District's educational mission cannot be permitted.

Formal, school-wide recognition of anniversary dates will not occur.

If the death of a student or staff member occurred in a public location accessible by community members, such as a crash site, District staff will not provide memorial monitoring.

Review/Revised:8/26/2019