

Purpose

The District recognizes that the loss of a student or staff member deeply impacts students, staff and families. To support those dealing with loss the District provides a process for memorial decision-making.

This regulation also recognizes that memorials after suicide may glamorize death and communicate suicide as an appropriate or desired response to stress; therefore, careful and deliberate consideration is given in determining approved memorials.

In recognition that schools are designed primarily to support learning, the schools discourage the establishment of living memorials. It is further recognized that campus administration should have a certain amount of discretion in these situations to make professional judgments--in consultation with the Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Schools or the Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools to best meet the overall needs of students, staff, parents and community as a whole.

Definitions

Memorials: Objects or activities to remember an event or deceased person(s).

Living Memorials: A tangible or non-tangible memorial intended to be sustained over time.

Critical Incident: Any traumatic 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.

Crisis: An acute, emotional, cognitive and physical reaction to a critical incident.

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

Living Memorials

Living memorials include, but are not limited to: scholarships, endowments, benches, gardens, trees, or plaques/signs.

Schools do not operate or maintain scholarships and endowments.

In the event that a request for a living memorial is received, the request will be referred to the Principal, counselor, and Assistant Superintendent.

**Living Memorials
Review Procedures**

1. Persons submitting a living memorial request should submit the name and biographical data of the person the memorial will honor and the rationale for the memorial.
2. Requests will be reviewed using careful and deliberate consideration of the potential implications the memorial would have for students, staff, families and the community.

3. Requests will also be reviewed to determine any future financial impact the memorial would have for the district.
4. The principal will notify persons requesting a living memorial of the final decision.

Yearbooks

A student who has died may be acknowledged in the yearbook as a part of their class in the same way as their living peers which includes pictures, short quotes, and acknowledgement of contributions the student has made to the school. In order to avoid sensationalizing the death of a student and the impact it may have on mentally vulnerable students, tribute pages in the yearbook should not be permitted.

Commemorative Events

A commemorative event may be established and held in the name of the deceased student or staff member. Activities should not be held during the school day, and should not be sponsored by a campus, campus class, club, or activity in which the deceased student or staff member participated. Advertisement of events should occur outside the school day. It is recommended that commemorative events utilize community partners (e.g., employers of the deceased, faith communities, etc.).

Graduation Recognition

Upon the request of the student's parent and/or guardian, the district will allow a deceased student's parent(s)/guardians to participate in the campus commencement ceremony in honor of their student. Parents/guardians will be allowed to walk across the stage as the student's name is called as a member of the matriculating class. Participation will occur on the date of the ceremony in which the deceased student would have graduated.

Moment of Silence Recognition

Upon request or permission of the deceased student's or staff member's family, a 'moment of silence' may be used following the death of a student or staff member to honor their memory. School-wide moments of silence should occur within two school days following notification of the death. Moments of silence are also approved for use at co-curricular events in which the deceased participated, and community-based events.

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 educational needs of students.

Prohibited Memorial Activities

Selling and/or fundraising of memorial items during the school day is prohibited. District student activity or campus 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, 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.

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.