

## **YME Student Memorials Policy**

NOTE: This policy is set forth to provide guidance for honoring students who have died while attending YME Public Schools. The policy's implementation and exceptions will be at the discretion of the Superintendent.

No family should have to suffer the death of a child. Such a loss is a tragedy of immeasurable proportions and it touches many people beyond the family, including friends, classmates, teachers and staff in our school.

Acknowledging this death within the school is also a difficult process. Every death is felt in a unique way, driven by different factors such as the age of the child lost, parent and family 'connectedness' to school life, and friendship groups of the child. To be sure, every loss is felt by the school with an equal sense of 'emptiness' and a concern for those who grieve in a direct way, as well as for those who simply lost a classmate. Everyone understands that the death of a child is unjust and unfair and it leaves everyone with a heightened sense of vulnerability.

During the grieving process, the school works to provide support for everyone. For our students, grief counselors will be made available and students wanting to 'take action' are given guidance and support. Parents are also provided with support as desired and are often provided the opportunity to create a lasting memory by making a contribution to the school through scholarships or the school may accept a living memorial, such as a bush or tree.

In recognizing the importance of providing support to a family experiencing such a loss and while wanting to provide the support that is meaningful to everyone, the district has established a set of practices to honor a child who dies while a student at YME Public Schools.

1. At the request of the parent, the district will assist in the development of a memorial scholarship in the name of the deceased child or family. Proceeds given and accepted will be in accordance with school guidelines and parent wishes in establishing a scholarship award.

2. At the graduation ceremony of the class of the deceased student, a single flower will be displayed in honor of his or her memory and the loss will be acknowledged in the ceremony.

The district will accept no other forms of memorials. We believe that the proper place for a lasting memorial is in the homes of those who have been lost, at their final resting places and in the hearts of the many people who have been touched by knowing them.