



## MEMORIALS

### Background

The district recognizes that the loss of a member of the school community is deeply felt by students, staff and families. Following the loss of a student or staff member, the primary focus will be on helping those affected by a death to make connections to appropriate school and community resources.

Sometimes, in the immediate aftermath of a crisis or death, memorials are proposed without full consideration of the potential implications for students, staff, families and the community. It is important that memorialization in different situations, while not necessarily the same, be equitable and fair. This procedure provides district parameters to guide decision making regarding school-related memorials.

### Procedures

1. Funeral services will not be held in district facilities. Memorial 'celebration of life' type services may be held with approval by the school principal and superintendent, but the service cannot be held during the school day and should not disrupt school events.
2. The graduation ceremony is reserved for the celebration of academic achievement and the future opportunities available to all the school graduates. In the event of the death of a student immediately preceding graduation, school administration should work together with the family of a deceased student to properly recognize the student's completion of high school (i.e. a member of the family could be invited to accept the diploma prior to the awarding of diplomas to all graduates).
3. **Temporary or Spontaneous School Memorials**
  - 3.1 Temporary school memorials are generally discouraged as they can inadvertently become traumatic stimuli for others, however if approved by the director of learning support services, a temporary memorial may be displayed for a short time (no longer than one week) and will then be offered to the family. Examples of possible allowable temporary memorials are flower arrangements, banners, pictures, notes, or locker displays.
  - 3.2 The school principal and/or vice-principal should regularly monitor informal memorials to ensure that there is no harmful messages or inappropriate items. Memorial items must not pose a safety concern.
  - 3.3 No memorial should be removed without the school first communicating the plan to the school community, including what will be done with non-perishable items (i.e. the memorial will be removed on Friday afternoon and the stuffed animals will be donated to the pediatric department of the hospital).
4. **Permanent Memorials**
  - 4.1 Permanent memorials for deceased students and staff are encouraged to be limited to scholarships, and books or items with educational significance.

4.2 All permanent memorials must be approved by the superintendent, school principal and, where applicable, the manager of operations before being placed within a school building or on school grounds. Approvals must consider ongoing and future maintenance.

4.3 Markers (limited to those accompanying the planting of trees, shrubs, perennials on school grounds) will be moved when necessary and may be permanently removed after ten years and offered to the nearest relative.

4.4 The district will not replace memorials that become damaged or worn.

## 5. **Memorial Gifts or Fundraisers**

5.1 Memorial gifts or fundraisers organized in school must have the consent of the school principal. The district's established process and procedures for fundraisers should be followed. Suggested memorials include a blood drive, partnering with local non-profit organizations and related activities, or establishing a scholarship. As a courtesy, the family of the deceased student or staff member should also provide consent before engaging in the activity.

Related Procedures:      OP 150 Fundraising  
                                    OP 310 Scholarships  
                                    OP 528 Equipment Donations

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