

4:155 Student and Staff Memorial Policy (New Policy)

The School District recognizes the far-reaching impact a student's or staff member's death may have on other students, staff, families and the community. The District believes that remembrance of a student or staff member whose life ended during his/her years in the School District should be consistent and equitable from case to case, and considerate of the grief process of family, friends, and coworkers, and in accordance with Board policy. Further, the District recognizes that decisions made about memorials immediately after traumatic events may not take into full consideration the potential impacts to students, staff, and community members. Memorials set a precedent for the future and need to be equitable. The purpose of this policy is to assist staff, students, and families affected by a death by providing guidelines for decision-making regarding memorials and memorialization activities.

MEMORIAL

Memorial gifts/fundraisers organized in school must have the consent of the school administration and any other consent as required by District policies and/or procedures. The District's established processes and procedures for fundraisers should be followed. Students and staff may be given direction as to what is appropriate as a memorial.

In a situation where informal events or gatherings such as candlelight vigils, which are not school sponsored, occur on District grounds, it is requested that the school administration be notified.

The graduation ceremony is reserved for the celebration of scholastic achievement and the anticipation of future opportunities available to all of the graduates of the School District. The school administration will work together with the family of a deceased student to properly recognize the student's completion of high school. A member of the family will be invited to accept the diploma prior to the awarding of diplomas to all graduates.

MEMORIALS ON FACILITIES AND GROUNDS

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.

The following guidelines apply to all other requests for memorials in school facilities or on District grounds.

Approval of Memorials

All memorials must be approved by the superintendent and Board of Education (the "Approval Authorities") depending on the type of memorial before being placed within a school building or on school grounds. To avoid unnecessary expense and possible disappointment, the District recommends that individuals refrain from purchasing any type of memorial until it has been approved.

The Approval Authorities will determine the location of all memorials on school grounds or in school facilities. While requests will be considered, when possible, the Approval Authorities must consider such issues as design parameters, whether the memorial blends with the school campus, ongoing and future maintenance, and the effect a memorial may have on students and staff.

The District requires that all approved memorials have a permanently affixed plaque indicating who the memorial is for and when the memorial was established. The wording on the plaque must be approved by the Approval Authorities.

EXISTING MEMORIAL OPTIONS

This policy came into effect as the result of an unfortunate incident. In 2023 the District removed three evergreen trees that were planted in 1999 to memorialize three students who lost their lives during the 98-99 school year. These trees had no plaque or marker to indicate they were memorial trees and no staff members involved in the removal were employed by the District during that time period. Memorials established prior to the

implementation with permanent plaques will remain intact. However, some memorial plantings or items may not have been marked and the District may not be aware of the memoria. The District will do its best to ensure no existing unmarked memorials are removed in the future.

Adopted: October 16, 2023