



Policy and Procedures

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Title: Student Memorials

STUDENT MEMORIALS

The District recognizes the loss of a student is deeply and broadly felt in the school community. For fellow students, it may be their first direct experience with losing a friend and/or classmate. For parents, it is an almost unbearable tragedy. For educators, it is a time of difficult balance between allowing students a time to grieve and encouraging a return to school work.

The District will make all efforts possible to support the known needs of students and staff members impacted by the tragic death of a student. Because school is a major part of our lives, those within our school community may feel the need to memorialize the life of a deceased student as a means of coping, healing, and remembering. The purpose of this policy is to provide District accepted guidelines describing the types of memorials which may be established within the District and/or individual school setting. Since schools are places designed primarily to support learning, these guidelines will ensure memorials are appropriate and consistent across the District. Memorials shall be limited to students who have passed during their time of attendance at a district school. Authorized permanent memorials previously placed on District property prior to acceptance of this District policy shall remain in their current locations unless a written request to remove is received from the deceased's family. This policy was developed after consulting with many sources and experts.

Acceptable Types of Student Permanent Memorials

Due to the very personal, emotional, and sensitive nature represented by such memorials, every permanent memorial must first be approved in writing by the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s). Grief experts recommend that a minimum of four to six months pass after the loss of a student before a recommendation is made for a permanent memorial. Accordingly, except where the nature of the planned permanent memorial is time-sensitive (e.g. yearbook and student newspaper), the District requires that a minimum of four months pass before any request is submitted. Parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) must be in complete agreement regarding the creation of any memorial. Memorials submitted for approval without full parental/guardian agreement shall not be permitted.

An application for student memorials (JU-E) involving the District, including its schools, facilities, programs, or personnel, must first be submitted in writing to the school principal by the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s). The application will be reviewed by the school principal, the superintendent and the Board of Education.

Permanent Memorials shall be limited to the following:

1. Yearbook. A student who has died may be acknowledged in his/her school yearbook in the year of the student's death. Information about the student may be included on a "Memorial Page." The information shall be limited to the student's name, photo, dates of birth and death, and school activities in which the student participated. Any other information must be specifically approved by the school principal.
2. School Newspaper/Newsletter. Acknowledgement of a student's death and/or a tribute to his/her life may be included in one issue of the school's newspaper or newsletter.
3. Dedications. An existing school program, playbill, or specific event may be dedicated to the memory of the deceased student. Dedications shall be limited to one-time events relevant to those activities in which the student participated. Dedications should take place before graduation of the school year during which the death occurred.
4. Award/Scholarship Plaque. Creating an annual award/scholarship in the name of the deceased student is recommended by many grief experts as an honorable way to memorialize the legacy left behind. Most schools present the recipient of this Award/Scholarship near the end of the school year that coincides with 'end of year' ceremonies. A resulting award/scholarship plaque may be hung in the building at a location to be determined by the school principal.
5. Honorary Diploma. An honorary diploma may be awarded posthumously by the District in the name of a student who has died during his or her enrollment in a District high school. The diploma will be awarded at the same time as the deceased student's graduating class.
6. Plantings. Plantings should take place in an optional viewing site on the side or perimeter of campus and plans should be approved in advance by maintenance and grounds staff for a review of irrigation and maintenance issues.

Temporary Student Memorials

A temporary memorial may only be placed in a location approved by the school principal, superintendent and School Board president. It shall remain for no more than 10 days. During that time, commemorative gatherings (e.g. candlelight vigils) may also be held subject to the same approval process. The thoughtful removal of any temporary memorial shall occur when no students are in session. Upon removal of the items at the site, they shall be offered to the family. If the family of the deceased student disapproves of the memorial, it shall be removed immediately.

Commemorative or Memorial Services

Commemorative or memorial services for a deceased student shall not, as a standard practice, be held at school facilities or on school grounds within the School District. The lasting memory of a school's use for the purpose of a memorial may detract from the educational mission of the District and could also prompt unforeseen reactions in students and staff. However, if there are circumstances making it appropriate for a memorial or commemorative service for a deceased student to take place on District property, special approval must be obtained from the Superintendent, in consultation with the District crisis team. Even if approved, under no circumstances shall a commemorative or memorial service be held during school hours or require the altering of school activities or the use of public funds.

Adopted March 18, 2014

Pueblo School District No. 60, Pueblo, Colorado

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