

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 719
PRIOR LAKE - SAVAGE AREA SCHOOLS**531 MEMORIALS FOR DECEASED STUDENTS OR STAFF****I. PURPOSE**

It is recognized that the loss of a member of the school community is deeply felt by students, staff and families. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools will support staff, students and families impacted from a death through assisting them with connections to appropriate school and community resources. Because it is recognized that memorial decisions made immediately in the aftermath of a crisis or death may be made without full consideration of the potential implications for students, staff, families and the community, the Prior Lake- Savage Area Schools will provide a process for memorial decision-making.

II. DEFINITION

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

Building Recovery Team: A designated group of staff members within each school building who plan and implement mental health support for grief recovery.

Crisis: Any natural disaster or unexpected 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.

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

District Recovery Team: A designated group of staff members who develop and execute district-wide procedures for the handling of mental health needs in the recovery phase of a crisis situation needing grief support.

III. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

In recognition that schools are designed primarily to support learning, school sites should not serve as the main venue for the memorializing of students or staff.

Memorial activities expressed at school need to be coordinated and approved through the school's Building Recovery Team (BRT). The BRT will assist families and students in selecting memorial activities that are appropriate for school and assist students in healthy bereavement.

Temporary school memorials, as approved by school administration and the Director of Operations/Transportation, may be displayed until the day of the funeral and will then be given to the family. Any selling of memorial items must receive prior approval from administration. Allowable temporary memorials are banners, pictures, and locker and student desk displays. Memorial symbols displayed by individual students or staff on school grounds will be limited to one month past the funeral.

Permanent memorials for deceased students and staff will be limited to living memorials, endowments, scholarships, plantings and books or items with educational significance. Plantings may be made in a designated location on a perimeter location of the school grounds, pending approval of the Director of Operations/Transportation. This practice allows for the memorial while respecting the well-being of all students and staff. Planting memorials may not require district resources to maintain. Permanent memorials may not include the retirement, alteration, or discontinued use of school property. Existing

memorials established prior to the implementation of this policy will not be affected.

Memorials following a death from suicide must not glamorize, romanticize or stigmatize the act of suicide. Memorials must also be sensitive to the family and emotional well-being of all students.

School district facilities will not be used for memorial services or funerals. However, the superintendent, in consultation with the District Recovery Team, has the discretion to consider school-wide memorial activities when a crisis event or death of a student or staff member has a significant impact on a majority of students, staff and community.

School staff will monitor anniversary dates and may provide friends of the deceased small group or individual counseling and other supportive activities to assist with grief recovery. School wide recognition of anniversary dates will not occur.

Scholarship | Endowment Memorials

The district recognizes that families and/or organizations may wish to establish a scholarship or endowment in honor of a deceased individual.

Scholarship and endowment memorials may be established one time, or in the form of a perpetual award, with a description of the purpose of the scholarship or endowment.

Scholarships and endowment memorials must be self-sustaining and cannot become the responsibility of the school district.