

**DEATH OF STUDENT/STAFF MEMBER, FUNERALS, LIFE CELEBRATIONS,  
AND MEMORIALS**

Death and grief are an unfortunate part of life that communities face. A death of a student and/or staff member can be very devastating. This policy is intended to help maintain the balance of supporting our members who have suffered the loss, being respectful to the families that are experiencing the loss, and making decisions that are educationally sound to help students successfully deal with their grief.

**Death of a student and/or staff member**

In the event of a death of a student and/or staff member, the effected school's crisis plan should be enacted to ensure proper communication takes place and the appropriate support is provided for the members of the school community. Under the Superintendent's direction, the district crisis plan may also be enacted.

**Funerals and life celebrations**

RSU 19 certainly wants to assist families during their time of loss. RSU 19 also has the obligation to consult research that guides decisions on what should take place on district facilities and the present and future impact it will have on the students and staff members. If it is not possible to hold a ceremony at a facility equipped for funerals and memorial services and a family requests the use of a RSU 19 building, then the following guidelines need to be followed:

1. When possible, life celebrations/funerals will not take place at the facility that the student or staff member attended at the time of death.
2. There will be only closed caskets at ceremonies on RSU 19 property.
3. The event must occur when school is not in session.
4. Schools will act in a supportive manner but will not be responsible for the planning, coordination, and conducting the event. Funeral arrangements shall be coordinated between building administrators and funeral directors.
5. Fiscal responsibilities will be a consideration in the feasibility of hosting the event.

**Memorials and gifts made in memory of**

The District is very grateful to donations made to our schools. Due to the educational responsibility of maintaining a learning environment that is conducive to learning and promoting healing, the following guidelines are in place to guide gifts to a school:

1. The Board of Directors must approve all gifts.
2. Recognition of loss will not take place at high school graduation unless it is in the form of a scholarship. Posthumous diplomas will not be awarded unless the requirements for graduation have been met.
3. Gifts in memory of the deceased must be appropriate. Items that are determined to impede the healing process will be respectfully declined.
4. Placement of gifts shall be approved by the Board or its designee.