

Note: The following optional policy may be revised or deleted to reflect district philosophy and needs. School districts may wish to adopt this policy limiting student/staff memorials to avoid inconsistent treatment between particular deceased students or staff, disruption to memorials when school building or grounds are renovated, space availability and maintenance of memorials, and concerns about how a memorial may impact students at risk of suicide.

The School Board recognizes that the loss of a member of the school community has a great impact on students, staff, and families. Furthermore, the School Board recognizes that decisions made about memorials immediately after traumatic events may not take into full consideration the potential impacts for students, staff, and community members. The purpose of this policy is to assist staff, students and families impacted by a death by providing guidelines for decision-making regarding memorials and memorializing activities. “Memorials” mean objects or activities meant to remember an event or deceased person(s).

The focus of a school is to support students in their learning. This may necessarily include support for students and staff who are grieving a loss of a member of the school community. Memorials, though, can be an ongoing reminder of a traumatic event and can be impossible for students to avoid when located on school property.

Note: Following are optional provisions providing alternative language for school districts as to permanent and temporary memorials. Option 1 prohibits all permanent and temporary memorials. This option provides a clear directive for families of students/staff and avoids many of the potential problems with school memorials outlined in the note above, but may be considered harsh by families of the deceased. Option 2 provides that districts may allow temporary memorials to deceased students/staff, but provides guidance on the content, type and duration. While Option 2 provides districts more flexibility, it does not avoid all concerns identified in the note above. If Option 2 is adopted, it should be applied in an even-handed manner.

[Option 1] Therefore, school buildings and grounds shall not be used for permanent or temporary memorials. Additionally, the district does not authorize public memorial activities during the school day or during school-sponsored activities. The district recommends that gifts and recognitions in memory of an individual be in the form of student scholarships, or donations in the name of the deceased.

(cf. 1330 – Use of School Facilities)

[Option 2] Therefore, permanent memorials for deceased students or staff shall be limited in form to perpetual awards, scholarships or collections of books or items of historical or educational significance. Temporary school-wide memorials for deceased students or staff may include plaques or other displays which shall contain “in memory of,” or similar language, and the deceased individual’s name, date of birth and date of death. Memorials shall be limited to one per loss. Temporary memorials shall be removed from display at the end of the school year in which the death occurred and given to the family of the deceased.

MEMORIAL POLICY
(continued)

This policy will guide decisions moving forward from the date of first adoption and will not impact previous memorials. The guidelines regarding memorials will be kept in each building and in the office of the superintendent. Persons who have questions, comments or concerns should contact the Superintendent or designee.

Added 3/2016