

## Unity School District - Board of Education

### Board Policy 323.3

#### Memorials and Funerals

Last Revised 9/12/2023

The Board recognizes that when a school community experiences the sudden death of a student, staff or community member with particular ties to the school community over a period of many years, it is important to the school community and to those who are personally affected by the death to acknowledge the event. Use of school district property for memorial services **or other purposes related to the individual's death** ~~is not permitted; however, requests from students, staff, parents or others for remembering or memorializing a person~~ may be approved by the Superintendent or designee, at his/her discretion. A reason(s) for the Superintendent or designee to deny the request may include, but is not limited to any or all of the following circumstances: ~~subject to the provisions of this policy:~~

- District facilities are already scheduled for an event on the requested date for services.
- Student activities are scheduled on the requested date for services.
- School is in session.
- School staff are unable/unavailable on the date of the requested services to help facilitate the event.
- The event would cause the District to incur a cost.
- The Superintendent determines that the interests of the District would not be served by such an event occurring on District property.

Priority in decisions regarding the use of district property for memorial services or other purposes related to the individual's death will be given to students and staff members with current/significant connections with the district; public service employees, such as law enforcement, firefighters, and government officials; and active duty/retired military personnel. Use of district property for memorial services or other purposes related to the individual's death will require a fee in accordance with the District's facility use guidelines and expectations.

Requests from students, staff, parents or others for remembering or memorializing a person may be approved by the Superintendent or designee, subject to the provisions of this policy.

In the immediate aftermath of a death, at the discretion of the Principal, the school building may be opened with counselors available to address student needs, and temporary memorials may be permitted. He/she will consult with the family of the deceased, as appropriate. The display of all remembrances will be temporary in nature, removed in a timely manner, and offered to the family. Gifts or donations for scholarships or to the scholarship fund are encouraged for a more lasting remembrance. Gifts shall comply with Board Policy Gifts, Bequests and Scholarships.

~~Requests may be made to memorialize an individual in school yearbooks or at school events, such requests require the approval of the District Administrator.~~

Activities that will not detract from scheduled classroom or school activities, or the celebration of student accomplishments may, with proper building principal approval, be authorized. Activities or events may be rescheduled or cancelled with prior District Administrator or designee approval only. Major school ceremonies such as graduation, awards, and scholarship events or the like, are not appropriate for significant memorial activities.

Schools may observe a moment of silence in memory of the individual as deemed appropriate by the District Administrator or designee. Additional District counseling services may be made available to provide support. Student, staff, or community deaths will not be announced or memorialized over the intercom or on reader boards. School will not be dismissed early or cancelled on the day of a memorial or funeral service. A student's excused absence for a funeral must be approved by the parent and school principal. Flags may be lowered only in accordance with state and federal law.

District property (e.g. buildings, rooms, fields, gymnasiums, etc.) may be named or renamed to memorialize an individual with Board approval only. Such approval requires prior consideration and sponsorship of the Board Policy & Programming Committee.