

USE OF FACILITIES FOR FUNERALS

School facilities are available to the community for education, civic, cultural, and other non-commercial uses consistent with the public interest, when such does not interfere with the school program or school-sponsored activities. Use of school facilities for school purposes has precedence over all other uses. Persons on school premises must abide by the District's conduct rules at all times. Every effort will be made to try to accommodate the grieving family and still maintain an education environment. *However, school facility requests for funeral services for victims of drug or alcohol related deaths, may be encouraged to seek use of other non-school facilities. In addition, funerals for victims of suicide will **not** be held in the school facilities.*

Suicide:

School administrators must allow students to grieve the loss of a peer without glorifying the method of death. Over emphasis of a suicide may be interpreted by vulnerable students as a glamorization of the suicidal act, which can assign legendary or idolized status to taking one's own life. The following "Do's and Don'ts" will help school staff limit glamorization of suicide, help to control grief and to remember the emotional well-being of the survivors:

- A. Do acknowledge the suicide as a tragic loss of life
- B. Do allow students to attend funeral services with parental written permission
- C. Do allow as many staff to attend the funeral as possible; dependent on availability of substitutes
- D. Do provide support for students profoundly affected by the death
- E. Do **not** use the school facilities for the funeral service
- F. Do **not** organize school assemblies to honor the deceased student
- G. Do **not** dedicate the yearbook or yearbook pages, newspaper articles, proms, athletic events, or advertisements to the deceased individual
- H. Do **not** pay tribute to a suicidal act by planting trees, hanging engraved plaques, etc or holding other memorial activities
- I. Do **not** fly the school flag at half-staff
- J. Do **not** have a moment of silence at school during school hours

The above "do not" items tend to glorify the death. If a "do not" is ignored, the following questions need to be asked: "Will this alleviate the pain?" or "Will this compound the pain?" **A suicide in the school community can heighten the likelihood in the subsequent weeks of "copycat" suicide attempts and threats among those especially vulnerable to the effects of a suicide.** To prevent further tragedies, students considered to be especially susceptible to depression/suicide must be carefully monitored and appropriate action taken if they are identified as high risk. These efforts require a limited, rather than school wide, response.

Illegal Drugs/Alcohol:

The educational community continually emphasizes that underage drinking and/or illegal drug use is detrimental to one's health as well as being illegal. Allowing a funeral on school premises, as a result of an illegal alcohol/drug related death that is officially verified by law enforcement agency or agencies, could be considered counter to the message the school district is trying to instill in its youth. Therefore, each facility request will be handled on a case-by-case basis with the understanding that families may be encouraged to seek use of other non-school facilities in the community.

Cross Reference:

4261 Memorials/Naming of Buildings and Grounds

Board Signature:

Adoption:

09.12.17

Revised: