

## **Commemoration Guidelines**

A school commemoration is intended to bring closure to a period of grieving and serves as a point from which to move on. Appropriate commemorative activities are those that benefit students and staff and help them cope with their grief. Commemorations should reflect the needs of the school community while being respectful to the deceased individual and their family. Prior to any commemorative activities or events occurring in the Addison CSD, a formal written request must be submitted to the Superintendent for consideration/approval.

For each commemoration, it is important to think about the precedent that is being set and the long-term implications. These guidelines are intended to assist building and district administrators, who should work with families and/or assist individuals or groups who want to commemorate students and staff so as to be prepared to offer acceptable options. Student commemorations will be permitted for students who were enrolled in a district program at the time of the student's death.

- It is recommended that the commemoration wait until the immediate impact of the loss has subsided, but occur before the opening of the next school year.
- If a temporary location (i.e. student's locker or desk) is established, specify time limits (1 week) and that items left will be shared with the family.
- Allow student and staff opportunities to attend services within the community.
- Within the classroom, activities that address the loss will be conducted as is developmentally appropriate, with the support of the building crisis team.

### **Commemorations**

The school reserves the right to accept or reject any and all commemorations donated or purchased in memory of a student or staff member. Furthermore, the school has the right to cause all commemorations, currently on school properties, to be discontinued.

#### **Suggested options include:**

1. Purchase of library books, school supplies and equipment, with the approval of the building administrator. Donated books may include an engraved bookplate not larger than two by six inches. Wording on the plates will be limited to "Donated in Memory of: or "In Memory of" and the student/staff member's name and year of donation. Any engraved plate other than bookplates will be removed at the end of ten years and offered to the family.
2. Contributions by students/staff to memorials designated by the family, i.e. Cancer Society, MADD, local charities, etc.
3. Scholarships or awards established in the names of students/staff.

### **Yearbook Guidelines**

1. Appropriate space may be designated (up to one page) in commemoration of all students/staff members who have died during that school year. This space may include a uniform size picture of each student/staff member, if available, along with the legal name and dates of birth and death, as deemed appropriate.
2. If there is a death after the printing of the yearbook and the student has not graduated, the student's picture may appear in the next year's yearbook. If the student was enrolled in high school, the student's picture may appear in the anticipated graduation year's yearbook upon consultation with the student's family.

3. A deceased student/staff member's picture, if available, may be included with the pictures of other students/staff in the class for the year covered by the yearbook.

## **Graduation**

1. Graduation is a time to recognize the many years of work and achievement of the seniors.
2. If the name of the deceased is read, it should be in the same order that it would have been read if the student were graduating.
3. If a posthumous diploma is to be awarded, the name should be read and the diploma presented to the family member by a staff member. The family member shall sit in a designated area for the presentation. Students should not be involved in the presentation.

## **Unacceptable commemorations include those which may:**

1. Violate Title IX federal guidelines.
2. Contradict our school district's mission.
3. Significantly alter the conduct of a regular school instructional day.
4. Significantly alter school activities or the school activities schedule.
5. Require the retirement or discontinued use of school property. This may include such items as monuments, statues, benches, etc.
6. Infringe on the separation of church and state.
7. Require the use of public funds for purchase, development or maintenance beyond the normal care and maintenance of school properties.
8. Any item that is affixed to the building (i.e. plaques).

## **Existing Commemorations**

Any commemoration in existence at the time these guidelines are implemented, whether in compliance with these guidelines or not, will remain in place until such time as their removal becomes necessary and offered to the family.

## **Notice of Address Change**

Family members of deceased students/staff members are encouraged to inform the school of any address changes so the District may return any commemorations to them.

## **Flag Etiquette**

The United States Flag is only lowered at the direction of the New York State Governor or United States President.