



Bereavements

Board Received: May 27, 2019 Review Date: June 2023

Policy Statement

The Grand Erie District School Board is committed to allow individuals to show respect in the event of the death of an employee, student or significant public figure. While the system shows its respect, it is expected to continue an educational program for students.

Accountability

1. Frequency of Reports – As needed
2. Criteria for Success – Clear communication occurs
– Staff/students supported appropriately

In the event of the death of an employee or student, Principals/Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that the following procedures are applied. Principals/Supervisors are requested to follow these procedures unless specifically directed to do otherwise by the Director of Education.

Procedures

1. Notification
In the event of the death of an employee or student, Principals/Supervisors should notify the Manager of Communications and Community Relations, who will send a message to the system.
2. School
 - a) The school remains open and programs continue to be offered to students;
 - b) Principals may choose to contact their Superintendent to arrange for the assistance of the Tragic Events Response Team;
 - c) Individual employees or groups of employees may attend a funeral as representatives of the school, according to the extent to which internal arrangements for coverage can be made within the school. Occasional teachers are not normally provided for this purpose.
3. Education Centre, School Support Centres
Individual employees or groups of employees may attend a funeral as representatives of the centres, according to the extent to which internal arrangements for coverage can be made within the centre.
4. Flag
In the event that flags need to be lowered, the Manager of Communications will send a message out to the system.
 - a) In the event of the death of a current employee or student, Principals/Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that the following procedures are applied. Principals/Supervisors are requested to follow these procedures unless specifically directed to do otherwise by the Director of Education.
 - i) the flag(s) at all schools, the Education Centre and School Support Centres will be flown at half-staff;
 - ii) the flags will be flown at half-staff for three days.

- b) In the event of the death of a former employee or student, Principals/Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that the following procedures are applied. Principals/Supervisors are requested to follow these procedures unless specifically directed to do otherwise by the Director of Education.
 - i) the flag of the school may be flown at half-staff, at the discretion of the Principal/Supervisor, when the death of a former employee or student occurs.
 - ii) the flag will be flown at half-staff for three days.

- c) In the event of the death of a local politician, traditional First Nation Chief, First Nation Band Council Chief, civic official, former or present Prime Minister, Head of State of Canada, or Premier of Ontario, Principals/Supervisors are required to follow these procedures unless specifically directed to do otherwise by the Director of Education.
 - i) the flag at the Education Centre, School Support Centres and schools shall be flown at half-staff on the death of a former or present Prime Minister, Head of State of Canada or Premier of Ontario.
 - ii) the flag at the Education Centre and the appropriate School Support Centres shall be flown at half-staff, and at any school at the discretion of the Principal/Supervisor, on the death of a local politician or civic official representing or working in the municipality where the school is located and on the death of certain individuals not covered above.
 - iii) the flag will be flown at half-staff for three days.

5. Memorial Statements

When a current staff member or student enrolled in our system passes away, and family permission is obtained, a Memorial Statement celebrating the life of the individual shall be submitted by the Principal/Supervisor to the Director of Education as soon as possible to be read at the next regular Board Meeting by a trustee. The statement will then be forwarded to the family, along with the Board's sincerest sympathy.

6. Sympathy Cards

When a staff member suffers the loss of an immediate family member (parent, partner/spouse, sibling or child), the information should be sent to the appropriate superintendent as soon as possible, including the name of the employee and the relationship of the employee to the deceased. These losses will be acknowledged with a sympathy card from the Superintendent.