

CODE: AEBC.AR

EFFECTIVE DATE: (29-01-2020)

TOPIC: Acknowledging Student, Staff and Trustee Deaths and Bereavements

ISSUE DATE: (29-01-2020)

REVIEW YEAR: (2022)

OBJECTIVE

To ensure that in the event of the death of a student, or a current or former staff member or Trustee, appropriate acknowledgement is made on behalf of the Division.

To ensure that, when the learning or working environment is impacted by a death, support is available for students and staff affected by the loss.

DEFINITIONS

Critical Incident Support Services Team (CISS) is comprised of a number of Division social workers and psychologists who provide assistance in supporting students and staff dealing with grief and loss resulting from a traumatic incident such as a death of a member of the school or work place.

Close family member includes spouse/partner, son/in-law or daughter/in-law, and parent/in-law or equivalent.

RESPONSIBILITY

1. The principal shall be responsible for acknowledging and responding to the death of a student in accordance with this administrative regulation.
2. Human Resources shall be responsible for acknowledging:
 - a. the death of a current or former staff member or Trustee; and
 - b. the bereavement of a staff member or trustee suffering the loss of a close family member, in accordance with this regulation.

REGULATION

A. DEATH OF A CURRENT STUDENT

1. The principal or a designate, on notice of the death of a student attending the school shall:
 - a. contact District Support Services for advice and assistance on protocol for acknowledging and responding to the death of a student;
 - b. determine what information is appropriate to be shared with the school community in consultation with and the permission of the deceased's family;
 - c. coordinate the extension of condolences on behalf of the school community and Division with consideration for the wishes of the family regarding the school's involvement;

- d. inform the Assistant Superintendent of Schools of the death and of the school's plans, and, if appropriate, request a condolence message be sent to the family from the Superintendent of Schools on behalf of the Division and Board of Trustees; and
- e. ensure that all student information systems and administrative processes are updated to reflect the student's status in a timely manner.

2. District Support Services shall provide principals with advice and assistance on protocol for acknowledging and responding to the death of a student and prepare a Trustee Transmittal Memorandum to inform the Board of Trustees of a student death.

B. DEATH OF A CURRENT OR FORMER STAFF MEMBER OR TRUSTEE

1. Human Resources shall on notice of the death of a:
 - a. staff member, trustee, or former trustee:
 - i. arrange for an appropriate acknowledgement to the bereaved family on behalf of the Division.
 - ii. prepare and issue a notice of bereavement for Trustee Transmittal Memorandum, Staff Room Remembrances, and a public Board report.
 - b. former staff member, prepare and issue a notice of bereavement for Trustee Transmittal Memorandum and Staff Room Remembrances.
2. Staff members who become aware of the death of a former staff member or trustee are encouraged to notify Human Resources to assist in ensuring appropriate acknowledgement.

C. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF A STAFF MEMBER OR TRUSTEE BEREAVEMENT

1. A principal/Decision Unit Administrator who is aware of a staff member or trustee who has suffered the loss of a close family member shall, when appropriate, request Human Resources facilitate a condolence message from the Superintendent of Schools on behalf of the Division and Board of Trustees.

D. IMPACT OF A STUDENT OR STAFF DEATH ON THE LEARNING OR WORKING ENVIRONMENT

The death of a student or staff member can have a significant impact on the learning and working environment.

1. The principal/Decision Unit Administrator shall coordinate an appropriate response to support students and staff impacted by a death within their school or work community.
2. District Support Services may provide principals/Decision Unit Administrators assistance in activating the CISS Team who will provide support in responding to a student or staff member death such as:
 - a communication plan and strategies to inform staff and students;
 - provision of grief counseling for affected students or staff;
 - provide information about supports through the Employee and Family Assistance Program to staff members;
 - considerations for any contemplated school or work place memorial service; and
 - offering assistance to parents and other members of the school community by referring them to appropriate community agencies.

REFERENCES

CWA.AR - Expenditure of Public Funds

HHCF.AR - Student or Staff Suicide

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act