

Mesa County Valley School District 51

Memorials:

No permanent memorialization and/or tribute shall be allowed on any District property within ten years of death. Thereafter any permanent memorialization and/or tribute may be erected if approved by the Board of Education. This policy shall not require removal of any permanent memorials or tributes having been erected or displayed, with the approval of the Superintendent or building administrator, prior to June 1, 2017.

Legal Reference:

C.R.S. 22-32-109.1(4) (school response framework is required part of safe schools plan)

Cross References:

JRA/JRC, Student Records

Littleton Public Schools:

Recognizing the loss of a member of the school community is deeply felt, schools will support staff, students, and families who feel the loss and will assist them in making connections to appropriate community resources. As places designed primarily to support learning, school sites should not serve as the main venue for the memorializing of students or staff. All memorials require principal or director level employee approval in consultation with members of the district crisis team.

Memorials are strongly discouraged in the instance of suicide. The American Association of Suicidology has documented tremendous research that states memorials contribute negatively to the contagion effect. Memorials following suicide may glamorize death and may communicate suicide is an appropriate or desired response to stress. Instead, projects that are life-affirming and help the living are encouraged. Examples that include volunteering, tutoring, fundraising for a charity, or community service would be more appropriate.

Memorial services

Memorial services for individuals shall not, as a standard practice, be held at school facilities or on school grounds within the school district. The lasting memory of a school's use for the purpose of a memorial may detract from the educational mission of the district and could also prompt unforeseen reactions in students and staff. If there are extraordinary circumstances for a memorial service to take place on district property, special approval must be obtained from the superintendent, in consultation with the district crisis team.

Types of memorials

1. Permanent memorials. Permanent memorials shall be limited in form to awards, scholarships, plantings, collections of books, or items of historical or educational significance. It is recommended to focus efforts on one memorial project when a significant loss occurs. Plantings should take place in an optional viewing site on the side or perimeter of campus, and plans should be approved in advance by the operations, maintenance, and construction staff for a review of irrigation and maintenance issues.
2. Temporary memorials. Temporary memorials may include plaques (no more than 12" by 15") or other displays that are removed within one calendar year. Plaques shall only contain the following words without symbols: "In memory of [the

individual's name and, if requested, dates of birth and death]." The thoughtful removal of any temporary memorial shall occur when no classes are in session.

Woodland Park School District:

The District recognizes the loss of a student is deeply and broadly felt in the school community. For fellow students, it may be their first direct experience with losing a friend and/or classmate. For parents, it is an almost unbearable tragedy. For educators, it is a time of difficult balance between allowing students a time to grieve and encouraging a return to school work.

The District will make all efforts possible to support the known needs of students and staff members impacted by the tragic death of a student. Because school is a major part of our lives, those within our school community may feel the need to memorialize the life of a deceased student as a means of coping, healing, and remembering. The purpose of this policy is to provide District accepted guidelines describing the types of memorials which may be established within the District and/or individual school setting. Since schools are places designed primarily to support learning, these guidelines will ensure memorials are appropriate and consistent across the District. Memorials shall be limited to students who have passed during their time of attendance at a district school. Authorized permanent memorials previously placed on District property prior to acceptance of this District policy shall remain in their current locations unless a written request to remove is received from the deceased's family. This policy was developed after consulting with many sources and experts.

Acceptable Types of Student Permanent Memorials

Due to the very personal, emotional, and sensitive nature represented by such memorials, every permanent memorial must first be approved in writing by the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s). Grief experts recommend that a minimum of 4-6 months pass after the loss of a student before a recommendation is made for a permanent memorial. Accordingly, the District requires that a minimum of 4 months pass before any request is submitted. Parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) must be in complete agreement regarding the creation of any memorial. Memorials submitted for approval without full parental/guardian agreement shall not be permitted.

An application for student memorials (JU-E) involving the District, including its schools, facilities, programs, or personnel, must first be submitted in writing to the school principal. The application will be reviewed by the school principal, the superintendent and the Board of Education.

Permanent Memorials shall be limited to the following:

1. Yearbook. A student who has died may be acknowledged in his/her school yearbook in the year of the student's death. Information about the student may be included on a "Memorial Page." The information shall be limited to the student's

name, photo, dates of birth and death, and school activities in which the student participated. Any other information must be specifically approved by the school principal.

2. School Newspaper/Newsletter. Acknowledgement of a student's death and/or a tribute to his/her life may be included in one issue of the school's newspaper or newsletter.

3. Dedications. An existing school program, playbill, or specific event may be dedicated to the memory of the deceased student. Dedications shall be limited to one-time events relevant to those activities in which the student participated. Dedications should take place before graduation of the school year during which the death occurred.

4. Commemorative Events. A commemorative school event may be established and held in the name of the deceased student. Commemorative events may be advertised, but not held, during school hours provided the advertising or the commemorative event does not alter the routing of a regular school instruction day, require the altering of school property, require the altering of school activities or the activities schedule, infringe on the separation of church and state, or require the use of public funds.

5. Award/Scholarship Plaque. Creating an annual award/scholarship in the name of the deceased student is recommended by many grief experts as an honorable way to memorialize the legacy left behind. Most schools present the recipient of this Award/Scholarship near the end of the school year that coincides with end of year ceremonies. A resulting award/scholarship plaque may be hung in the building at a location to be determined by the school principal.

Temporary Student Memorials

A temporary memorial may only be placed in a location approved by the school principal, superintendent and School Board president. It shall remain for no more than 10 days. Upon removal of the items at the site, they shall be offered to the family. If the family of the deceased student disapproves of the memorial, it shall be removed immediately.