

MEMORIALS AND MEMORIAL ITEMS

The Board recognizes that when a school community experiences the sudden death of a student or staff member, it is important to the school community and to those who are personally affected by the death to acknowledge the event. Additionally, certain traumatic events occurring on a local, state or national level may also give rise to the need for MSAD 55 acknowledgment through appropriate activities. Requests from students, staff, parents or others for remembering or memorializing a person or event may be approved by the Board, Superintendent or designee, subject to the provisions of this policy.

The Board recognizes that memorials of flowers, personal messages and mementoes are often created at lockers, parking spaces and other areas on district property upon such losses or events. Memorials may be permitted at the discretion of the Superintendent. They will consult with the family of the deceased, as appropriate. The display of all remembrances will be temporary in nature, removed in a timely manner and offered to the family.

Requests may be made to memorialize an individual or event in school yearbooks, at graduation ceremonies and other district activities. Activities that will not detract from scheduled classroom or school activities, or the celebration of student accomplishments may be permitted, with prior building principal approval. Activities or events may be rescheduled or cancelled with prior Superintendent approval only.

In considering memorial activity requests, school administrators will balance memorializing or commemorating the individual or event on the one hand with avoiding creating an atmosphere that glamorizes a traumatic event or self-destructive behavior on the other.

Items may be accepted by the Board in memory of an individual or event for installation and display. The Board will consider any maintenance costs to the district of such gifts. Items received become the property of the district and will be used for the purpose for which they were donated. MSAD 55 will not hang plaques commemorating the deceased or install permanent living memorials, such as planting trees unless approved by the Board.

Schools may observe a moment of silence in memory of the individual or in recognition of certain traumatic events as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent or designee. Additional district counseling services may be made available to provide support. Deaths will not be announced or memorialized on reader boards. School will not be dismissed early or cancelled on the day of a memorial or funeral service unless approved by the Superintendent.

Flags may be lowered only in accordance with state and federal law. District property (e.g., buildings, rooms, fields, gymnasiums, etc.) may be named or renamed to memorialize an individual with Board approval only.

For purposes of this policy, a Funeral Service is a service held to memorialize a deceased person with their body or cremated remains present. A Memorial Service is a service held to memorialize a deceased person with their body not present, and a Celebration of Life service is typically held in lieu of a memorial service after the deceased individual's burial or cremation. The Board recognizes the use of district property for the above defined services is generally inappropriate, however, permission may be granted on a case by case basis. Any such request will be considered in accordance with Board policy KF – Community Use of School Facilities and applicable administrative procedures.

Cross Reference: KCD – Public Gifts/Donations to the Schools

KF – Community Use of School Facilities

Adopted: August 5, 2015
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