

Memorials

When a member of the school dies often people will want to find ways to memorialize the student or staff member. A word of caution, carefully think through the type of tribute you pay to a person who has died.

Consider these points and examples:

- In general, memorials should focus on the life lived, rather than on the method of death.
- Yearbook memorials should be a regular sized picture with a simple statement such as “We’ll miss you”.
- If a school were to create a permanent or lasting memorial for one person, it would be difficult to refuse a similar memorial for another person. For example, a school that planted a tree for a student who died realized this was needed also for a second death and then a third. The resulting group of trees came to be referred to as “the graveyard” by students. Another school had a “memorial tree” die during one dry summer and had to address the hard feelings of the family who thought the tree had not been given proper care.
- There are many wonderful ways to support student’s as loved one’s do need to be remember, examples include: cards, food, kind words, work parties for relatives, scholarship funds, contributions to a favorite charity, flowers, or being remembered after the urgent time of the tragedy.
- Parents and loved ones especially want to know people miss the person and there was great sadness at the loss; they also want to know people assisted the grieving friends.
- Permanent or lasting memorials are not encouraged as a way for schools to remember someone who died as a result of suicide.