

**SCHOOL BOARD BOARD POLICY**  
**School District of Holmen**  
**Holmen, WI 54636**

**FILE: 494**  
**SECTION: 400**  
**STUDENTS**

**MEMORIALS**

**Philosophical Foundation:**

The School District of Holmen (District) recognizes that the loss of a school community member is deeply felt by students, staff and families. The District will support students, staff, and families impacted by a death connecting them with appropriate school and community resources. For many years in Holmen, memorials have served as an important function in the grieving and healing process. They recognize and honor the deceased as well as the survivors and the community members who supported them. The School District of Holmen recognizes the far-reaching impact a student's death may have and believes school memorials should be meaningful and life affirming.

**Definitions:**

Memorials: objects or activities meant to remember an event or deceased person(s)

Permanent Memorials: memorials intended to be sustained over time

Memorial Activities: activities to remember an event or deceased person(s)

Living Memorials: non-tangible memorials intended to be sustained over time

Temporary Memorials: memorials intended to be for a limited amount of time

**District Lead Memorial Activities:**

All memorial activities must occur under the direct supervision of Student Services team members. Memorials may not include the retirement, alteration, or discontinued use of school property. Other recommended memorial activities include:

Yearbooks: A student or staff member who has died may be acknowledged in the grade level yearbook during the year of their death and the year of their high school graduation. Information will be limited to their name, photo, date of birth and death, and school activities in which they participated.

Commemorative Events and/or Items: A commemorative event may be established and held in the name of the deceased student or staff member. Activities cannot be held during the school day, and may be sponsored by a class, club, or activity in which the deceased student or staff member participated. Advertisement of events must occur outside the school day. It is recommended that commemorative events utilize community partners (e.g., employers of the deceased, faith communities, etc.).

Graduation Recognition: Flowers will be placed on the graduation stage, as a symbol to represent all graduating class members, including deceased members of the graduating class. The deceased graduate's picture may be displayed in the slideshow at the ceremony and their name included in the graduation program. Reference to the deceased student may be made during the District Administrator's remarks and may include a moment of silence. All of these options for graduation will be offered to the family.

Upon graduation, the deceased student's picture will be included in the framed senior class photo, for as long as that tradition continues at Holmen High School.

Moment of Silence Recognition: A "moment of silence" may be used following the death of a student or staff member to honor their memory. School-wide moments of silence should occur within 2 school days following notification of the death. Moments of silence are also approved for use at District Board of Education meetings, co-curricular events in which the deceased participated, and community-based events.

Permanent Memorials: Donations of permanent memorials such as rocks or benches will be considered in accordance with Administrative Rule 657 Grants, Gifts, Contributions, and Donations. Approved memorials must be anonymous in that the item does not include reference to the name or other information of the deceased person(s).

District facilities will not be used for formal memorial services or funerals. Exceptions may be made for rental of District facilities by private parties with the approval of the District Administrator. In addition, the District Administrator, in consultation with the Student Services team, has the discretion to consider memorial events that utilize District facilities when the death of a student or staff member has a significant impact on a majority of students, staff, and/or community.

If the death of a student or staff member occurred in a public location accessible by community members, such as a crash site, District staff will not provide memorial monitoring.

#### **Memorial Guidelines:**

Following the death of a school community member, temporary memorials may be displayed within a District facility or on District grounds until the day of the funeral, or within one week following the death, after which time they will be given to the family by designated District officials.

Temporary memorials cannot alter District property. Allowable temporary memorials may include banners, pictures, notes and flowers, in designated locations and monitored by District officials. Building administration will consult with District leadership including the District Administrator and Student Services in order to best meet the overall needs of students, staff, parents, and the community as a whole.

In order to not interrupt instruction, any selling and/or fundraising of memorial items is prohibited during the school day. District student activity accounts cannot be used to support, finance, or fundraise for memorialization.

Examples of living memorials include endowments, scholarships, blood drives, gifts of library books, plantings, equipment or other items with educational significance. Living memorials should not distract from the educational environment.

Scholarship and endowment memorials may be a one-time gift or in the form of a perpetual award, with a description of the purpose of the endowment or scholarship. These memorials will be coordinated through the Student Services Department.

Anonymous plantings may be made in a designated, mutually agreed upon location of District property, pending approval of the District Administrator, Building Administrator, and Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds. Planting memorials may not require District resources to maintain. The planting may be removed as facility or environmental needs dictate, with personal notification made to a family member

of the deceased student or staff member, if known. The District is not responsible for the replacement of a planting due to removal or death of the planting.

\*As of the approval of this policy, all existing memorials will remain intact. Existing memorials are generally the sole responsibility of the entity providing the memorial; District staff and/or finances may only be used to maintain current memorials as part of the regular maintenance processes and/or to ensure safe conditions.

Legal Ref.:

Cross Ref.: Crisis Intervention Plan  
374, Student Fundraising  
457, Suicide Prevention/Intervention Program  
460, Student Scholarships  
657, Grants, Gifts, Contributions, and Donations  
662.1, Student Activity Funds Management  
723.5, Crisis Response and Management Plan  
830, Community Use of Facilities

Approved: October 12, 2020