

ATTACHMENT 4.25

COMMUNICATING WITH STUDENTS | SUICIDE / PERMITTED TO DISCLOSE

These scripts are intended to be used when communicating with students about a death beyond the initial notification. In this case, “death” refers to a staff or student suicide-death **and** the family has given the school permission to disclose cause of death. The recommended announcements after the initial notification are:

- Moment of Silence Announcement | End of Day 1
- Supportive Announcement | Beginning of Day 2
- Memorial Services Announcement | Anytime

Moment of Silence Announcement | End of Day 1

This announcement should be made by a school administrator at the end of Day 1, prior to dismissal. It is appropriate for this announcement to be made using the school’s PA system.

Today has been a sad and difficult day for all of us. We encourage you to talk about [insert name of deceased]’s death with your friends, your family, or whoever else gives you support. We will have mental health staff here for you tomorrow to help in dealing with our loss. Let us end the day by having the whole school offer a moment of silence for [insert name of deceased].

[PAUSE FOR A MOMENT OF SILENCE]

Please know that you are not alone in navigating this. Stay connected to your support system and take care.

Supportive Announcement | Beginning of Day 2

This announcement should be made in classrooms, preferably by teachers or SMHT members.

We know that yesterday was difficult and emotional. Learning about a suicide death can be confusing and painful, and we know those feelings don’t go away overnight. Trying to make sense of why this has happened is a common reaction, and not having closure is an especially hard part of grieving a suicide loss. I’m sorry any of us has to experience this.

Today we begin the process of returning to a normal schedule in school. This may prove very difficult for some, and it may be a welcome relief for others. Like we said yesterday, there is no “right way” to feel. Please know that mental health staff are still available in school to help us deal with our feelings. If you want to speak to one of these staff, either alone or with a friend, please tell a teacher or another staff member.

Memorial Services Announcement

This announcement should be made in classrooms, preferably by teachers or SMHT members.

We have information about [insert name of deceased]’s memorial services. The services will be held on [insert date, time, and place]. You may be excused from school to attend these services with your caregiver’s permission. We also encourage you to ask your caregivers to go with you. School mental health staff will be available at the school and on-site during the memorial services for any students who need support.