

APPENDIX D GUIDANCE ROLE

The Guidance staff should take the responsibility of gathering information about student/staff reaction to the crisis and act as a “hub of information”.

STEP #1

- A. Identify school staff who were close to the deceased student or staff member and who may need extra support (e.g., a teacher who had a special helping relationship with student, had the student in class, or has a sibling in class).
- B. Start a listing of “high risk” students in need of extra support. These include: close friends of the deceased student, relatives, students in the same activities or clubs as the deceased student, neighbors of the deceased student, students with other stressors (e.g., troubled youth and those who are quiet and withdrawn), students identified by faculty, students identified by other students, “suicidal” students with unresolved grief or loss (e.g. family member has committed suicide, divorce situation, recent moves), and students with “guilt” feelings.

STEP #2 – Guidance staff should briefly meet with all identified “high risk” students and with any students who are referred by staff. Decide what, if any, intervention is appropriate. Options could include: (a) brief supportive counseling with guidance staff and (b) forming a grief group. The grief group should automatically be formed the first day, and it may run all day. The focus is on memories of the deceased student and grief work.

STEP #3 – Identify absent and non-enrolled students who may be “at risk” and inform their parents of your concern.

STEP #4 – For students who request to leave school because of their grief reaction:

- A. Release student to parent or adult designated by parent.
- B. Let the student know that you expect him/her to return to school the next day.
- C. Check to see if the students returns the next day and briefly check with them to see how he/she is doing. Offer your assistance to the parent and/or student.

STEP #5 – At the end of the first day, the crisis management team should meet to debrief and review the list of “high risk” students.

At the end of one week, review the status of “high risk” students on the list. Determine which students may need to be referred to community mental health services.

STEP #6 – Discuss the role the guidance staff will provide in the funeral and memorial service. Provide location for students to come following the funeral and/or memorial service.

After the funeral, assist the building staff in moving toward a “business as usual” atmosphere as soon as possible. (An announcement will be made by the principal regarding continued availability of guidance staff.)

STEP #7 – Carefully review with the principal and Crisis Management Team members the memorial requests for the deceased student.