



PROCEDURE

HR-001

BEREAVEMENTS

Superintendent Responsible: Superintendent of Human Resources	Initial Effective Date: 2019/05/27
Last Updated: 2023/06/09	Next Review Date: 2026/06/09

Purpose:

To outline the communication process and other protocols that occur in the event of the death of an employee(s), student(s) or significant public figure, to allow the expression of sympathy and respect without interruption of the educational program for students.

Guiding Principles:

The following procedures should be followed unless direction is otherwise received from the Director of Education and Secretary of the Board or designate.

1.0 Notification

In the event of the death of an employee(s) or student(s), Administrator(s)/immediate Supervisor(s) who become aware should notify the Manager of Communications and Community Relations, who will send a message to the system, pending confirmed consent from the family or designate.

2.0 School

- 2.1 The school remains open, and programs continue to be offered to students.
- 2.2 Administrator(s) may choose to contact their Superintendent of Education to arrange for the assistance of the Traumatic Events Response Team.
- 2.3 Employee(s) may attend a funeral as representatives of the school, according to the extent to which internal arrangements for coverage can be made within the school.

3.0 Education Centre, School Support Sites

Employee(s) may attend a funeral as representatives of the sites, according to the extent to which internal arrangements for coverage can be made.

4.0 Flag

- 4.1 In the event of the death of a current employee(s) or student(s), Administrator(s)/immediate Supervisor(s) are responsible for ensuring the flag(s) at all schools, the Education Centre and School Support Centres are flown at half-staff for three (3) days, as appropriate.
- 4.2 In the event of the death of a former employee(s) or student(s), the flag of the school may be flown at half-staff for three (3) days, as appropriate, at the discretion of the Administrator(s)/immediate Supervisor(s).
- 4.3 In the event of the death of a local politician, traditional First Nation Chief, First Nation Band Council Chief, civic official, former or present Prime Minister, Head of State of Canada, or Premier of Ontario, Administrator(s)/immediate Supervisor(s) are required to follow these procedures unless specifically directed to do otherwise by the Director of Education and Secretary of the Board or designate:

- 4.3.1 The flag at the Education Centre, School Support Centres and schools shall be flown at half-staff on the death of a former or present Prime Minister, Head of State of Canada or Premier of Ontario, or at the direction of government officials.
- 4.3.2 The flag at the Education Centre and the appropriate School Support Centres shall be flown at half-staff, and at any school at the discretion of the Administrator(s)/immediate Supervisor(s), on the death of a local politician or civic official representing or working in the municipality where the school is located and on the death of certain individuals not covered above.
- 4.3.2 The flag will be flown at half-staff for three (3) days, as appropriate.

5.0 **Memorial Statements**

When a current employee(s) or student(s) enrolled in our system passes away, and family permission is obtained, a Memorial Statement celebrating the life of the individual may be submitted by the Administrator(s)/immediate Supervisor(s) to the Director of Education and Secretary of the Board or designate to be read at a Regular Board Meeting. The statement will then be forwarded to the family, along with Grand Erie's sincerest sympathy.

6.0 **Sympathy Cards**

When an employee(s) suffers the loss of an immediate family member (parent(s)/caregiver(s), partner/spouse, sibling or child), the information should be sent to the appropriate Superintendent where possible, including the name of the employee(s) and the relationship of the employee(s) to the deceased. These losses will be acknowledged with a sympathy card from the Director of Education and Secretary of the Board/Superintendent.

Reference(s):

- Traumatic Events Response Guide