

SAMPLE STAFF INSTRUCTIONS AND STUDENT ANNOUNCEMENT
SUPPORTING DOCUMENT TO
THE IDAHO SCHOOL RESPONSE GUIDELINES FOR SUICIDE AND SUDDEN DEATH

To the Staff of Sample High School:

- Please read this script to your first hour class. We realize how difficult this may be, but want to get accurate information out to students.
- Please only express known facts, and do not speculate or share your personal opinion about why the death occurred.
- If you need support in reading this or talking with your class, it is recommended that you have a crisis team member with you.
- There will be an immediate impact of this news and your classes may need time to process this information. If you would like support in your classroom, contact the counselor's office at xxx-xxxx and we will have support staff assist you.
- We are discouraging students from creating memorials which may glorify suicide.
- Students will have the opportunity to share memories and stories in a constructive manner with support staff.
- Grief may be display in many ways – sadness, withdrawal, irritability, anger, oppositional behavior or stillness. Grief brings up prior loss experiences. It is important to show tolerance and empathy. Keep in mind that your role is to acknowledge, validate and refer. Give the student a pass to the support room. You do not need to solve anything. Also remember that reactions can appear days or even months after the event.

Please read the following to your first hour class:

For High school

"This morning we heard the extremely sad news that (student/staff name) died last night. (Student/staff name) was a sophomore (or teacher, e.g.) and played on the (sports) team, e.g. (Student/staff name) attended (school). At this time, we do not officially know the cause of death and we have no information about funeral arrangements. We are all saddened by this and ask that you keep (first name) and his family in your thoughts today. If any of you feel that you need support please ask for a pass and go to the support room, or go to the room on your break. We will be following our regular school schedule." *[or follow class release protocol]*

For Jr. High/Middle School

"We need to take some time this morning to talk about something very sad. (Student), an 8th grader at (school), died last night unexpectedly. At this time we do not officially know the cause of his death. Death is difficult to deal with even if you didn't know (student) and you might have some emotional reactions to this news. It's important for you to express your feelings about (student's) death, especially sadness. There are counselors available all day today in the support room to talk to you and help you through this. If you need to talk to someone, ask for a pass and go to the support room, or go to the room on your break."

For Elementary School

“We need to talk about something very sad this morning. (Student/staff name) died recently. He was a 6th grader(or teacher, e.g.) at (school). Right now we don’t know how he died for certain. Death is hard to deal with even if you didn’t know (student/staff name) and you might have some sad feelings or other feelings after hearing about this. It’s very important for you to tell someone about your feelings. There are people who are ready to listen to you and help you today in room (room number). If you need to talk to someone, tell me and I will show you the way to the room.”