

## Sample Checklist for Death of a Student/Staff Member

The death of a student or a staff member can have a major impact on the daily operations of a school. Comprehensive advance planning and staff training can significantly reduce the negative impact such tragedies can have on students and staff. Many students and staff will have an emotional reaction when they learn about the death of another student or staff member. Other students and staff will experience more severe emotional reactions to these deaths because they witnessed the death, such as could happen in a school bus crash, discovered the body, or were exposed to the death scene. While each death is different in nature and cause, there are some basic guidelines to follow as the school attempts to help students and staff cope with a tragic loss.

**DIRECTIONS:** Use the following checklist to assess the school building's/school district's response. Place the date below and mark the individual's name, in the completed block, who is confirming that the action item has been completed.

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Action Item	Completed
<b>Death of a Student:</b>	
Notify Superintendent.	
Contact the Crisis Response Team and have a meeting as soon as possible.	
Crisis Response Team should alert mental health services.	
Hold a staff meeting as soon as possible. Review the procedures for the day, the availability of support services, and referral procedures for at-risk students. Give teachers the statement prepared by the Public Information Officer to read to their students.	
Contact family of the deceased. An Administrator and Crisis Team member should visit the family at their home and offer assistance.	
Identify siblings in the district who will need support. Contact their schools.	
Identify students closely associated with the deceased (friends, classmates, teammates, club members, etc.) and offer them support.	
Offer support to the staff members close to the deceased.	
Notify Transportation Director to alert bus drivers.	
Bus Drivers are notified in writing to be alert for students who show signs of emotional distress. The drivers should be provided a telephone number of a guidance counselor to call.	
Personal contact is made with the driver of the deceased student's bus. Supply a school staff member to ride the bus if it seems necessary.	
Monitor students who experienced recent deaths in their family.	
Shadow the schedule of the deceased student for a day.	

Secure all of the deceased student's personal property and collect from teachers items such as book reports, art work, and tests.	
Arrange a time and place to give these items to the family.	
Remove the student's name from the school roles to ensure avoidance of accidental correspondence being sent to the family.	
Hold a staff meeting at the end of the day to review day's events.	
Adjust this response for multiple deaths, as necessary.	
<b>Death of Staff:</b>	
Send counselors to meet with each of the teacher's classes or extracurricular groups.	
Provide support for other school staff.	
Several substitute teachers are brought in to allow regular teachers to seek additional emotional support.	
Communications:	
Notify the Public Information Officer to activate the Communications Plan.	
Communication Plan is activated.	
Cautions/Notes:	
School staff should not issue statements to the Media. All media inquiries should be referred to the Public Information Officer.	
Do not use substitutes for classes of the deceased. Use an experienced teacher familiar to the students.	