

Living Sky School Division No. 202

Administrative Procedure (AP) Manual



Procedure Name: Memorial Services and Memorialization			
Procedure Type:	School Operations	Implementation Date:	SEP 23, 2020
Procedure Number:	4.50	Last Approval Date:	JUL 19, 2026
AP Owner:	Superintendent of Learning	Last Reviewed:	JUL 19, 2026
Legal Reference(s):	<i>The Education Act, 1995, s. 175, 231</i>		

Background

Tragic events such as the loss of a member of the school community require a thoughtful and coordinated response. School division employees will support staff, students and families who experience this loss, and will assist with connections to appropriate community and school division resources. There are several supports available within Living Sky School Division (LSKYSD) schools including the in-house counselling team and their resources as well as outside agency support.

Scope

This procedure applies to schools who are experiencing or have experienced a loss of staff, student, or other member of the school community.

Definitions:

A **funeral** is a service that acknowledges, celebrates, and honours the life of a loved one who has passed away, and generally includes the human remains of the individual.

A **memorial service** is a memorial or celebration of life to acknowledge, celebrate and honour the life of a loved one who has passed away. A memorial service does not include human remains.

Procedures

Memorial and Funeral Services

1. As places designed primarily to support learning, school sites shall not serve as the main venue for the memorialization of students or staff, even those who have contributed greatly to the school
2. On rare occasions, situations may arise in which a school site may be considered an appropriate venue for a memorial service. The following criteria shall be considered when determining whether a facility request for a memorial is appropriate.
 - a. **Necessity** – The potential number of people who wish to attend an event creates the necessity of a large gym-like space in which to hold the event where no other space is available in the community. The facility booking would be treated as a special form of rental, following *AP 9.04 Community Use of School Facilities* and with special attention to fire regulations.
 - b. **Learning** – There shall be no interruption of student learning. Memorial events shall take place at reasonable time following school dismissal or on a weekend.
 - c. **Nature** – The nature of the memorial service shall be that of a celebration of life. Symbols of life and positive messages of hope shall be major components of such services. The ceremony shall not be a funeral and there shall be no bodily remains permitted for this type of memorial.



- d. **The Individual** – The person being memorialized shall be a member of the school community:
 - i. current student,
 - ii. current staff member, or
 - iii. current member of the learning community directly related in some manner to the school.
3. Memorials may not be appropriate at all in certain types of situations. Each situation shall be studied at the time of the request, and decisions shall be made by the director or designate.
4. Student participation or involvement in memorial services shall remain limited and shall be carefully monitored by school administration and counsellors.

Temporary/Spontaneous Memorials

5. Temporary school memorials at schools shall be discouraged by superintendents and school administration as they may act as traumatic stimuli for staff and students attending the school.
6. On rare occasions, the director or designate may approve a temporary memorial to be displayed at a school. The following criteria shall be considered when determining whether a request for a temporary memorial is appropriate.
 - a. **Informality** – The memorial is established by the family, friends, or members of the wider community. It shall not be an official memorial and shall not be established by LSKYSD, the school, the SCC, or staff.
 - b. **Duration** – The memorial is temporary in nature and shall only be in place until the funeral or memorial service has taken place
 - c. **Contents** – The memorial shall not contain harmful messages or inappropriate items. Memorial items must not pose a safety concern.
 - d. **Supervision** – The memorial shall be regularly monitored by school administration to ensure compliance with procedures.
 - e. **Closure** – The contents of the memorial shall be offered to the family once the funeral or memorial service has taken place.
7. No memorial shall be removed without the school first communicating the plan to the school community, including what will be done with the non-perishable items.

Permanent Memorials

8. Visible permanent memorials shall not be established on school grounds. Examples include, but are not limited to,
 - a. plaques and pictures,
 - b. furniture and fixtures,
 - c. rooms and other spaces, and
 - d. trees, flower beds, and gardens.
9. Longstanding memorials shall be limited to transient items with educational significance. Examples include, but are not limited to,
 - a. grants and scholarships,
 - b. awards and honours,
 - c. books and other educational materials.



If longstanding memorials become part of annual school ceremonies, such as graduation ceremonies, the deceased student or staff shall not receive greater mention than would be given to any other student or staff at the same ceremony.

Memorial Gifts or Fundraisers

10. Memorial gifts or fundraisers organized in a school shall be approved by school administration. As a courtesy, the family of the deceased student or staff member shall also provide consent before the activity is announced. Examples include, but are not limited to,
 - a. blood drives,
 - b. volunteer days, or
 - c. activities with a local not-for-profit.

Existing Shrines and Memorials

11. Any memorials that predate the establishment of this procedure in 2020 that are in violation of elements of this procedure shall be permanently removed within ten years, by 2030.
12. School administration shall work with the School Community Council to plan to remove existing shrines in a thoughtful and respectful manner. The removed memorial shall be offered to the nearest relative.

Related

2.01 School Community Councils

9.04 Community Use of School Facilities