Sample Letters to Parents

Dear Parent(s) or Guardian:

It is with sadness that I inform you of the death of Joe Doe, a sophomore in our school. John died from injuries suffered in a car accident which occurred last evening (do not specify reason if death by suicide or causes which are unknown, etc.).

The funeral will be held at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Funeral Home or Church) at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ a.m./p.m. Visitation will be held at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Funeral Home) during the hours of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Parents are encouraged to attend the funeral with their child. (Note: Send a letter home to parents even if you do not know the details of the funeral arrangements.)

Students will have varied reactions to the death of a peer. Any reaction is normal in the grief process and can range from withdrawal, to crying and anger. I encourage you to openly discuss with your child their reactions and feelings regarding the death of Joe.

Special counseling services have been made available to students today and will continue to be available throughout the week and longer, if needed.

If you think your child needs additional counseling support, please do not hesitate to contact the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (School Counseling Office) at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (phone number).

Sincerely,

Principal and Staff

Dear Parent:

As you may be aware, our school district has experienced a death of a (student/faculty member) that has affected us deeply.

The students and staff will react in different ways to the death of one of our school community members. We all should expect and try to understand that there will be a variety of emotions and responses to what has occurred. The most important thing we can do is to be supportive and encourage an open expression of feelings.

At the school, we have implemented a plan for responding to this tragic event focused on helping our students and their families get back to regular learning and every day activities as soon as possible. This plan has evolved from the district's experience with death in the past and the advice of mental health professionals from the community.

Our teachers and counselors have been briefed on our plans and have received guidelines for discussing about death and reactions to it. There will be district personnel available to students who need special attention and support. There is also help available from the community. We will try to maintain as normal a routine and structure as the situation and people allow, and we encourage you to do the same.

If you feel that your child or family needs some assistance, please contact us, and we will do everything we can to help you.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the school at (give preferred phone numbers). We know you will join us in our concern and sympathy for the family.

Sincerely,

Principal and Staff

Resource:

http://www.aea9.k12.ia.us/en/programs\_and\_services/integrated\_services/special\_education/coping\_with\_the\_sudden\_death\_of\_a\_student/sample\_letters\_to\_parents/