

***Grande Prairie and District
Catholic Schools No. 28***



BEREAVEMENT RESPONSE PLAN

Revised November 2007

Bereavement Response Plan

The death of a staff or student in any given school is a significant stress and/or loss to those persons. The spiritual and emotional impact is considerable.

This action material is meant as a support to help all school members deal with a loss.



Bereavement Response Plan

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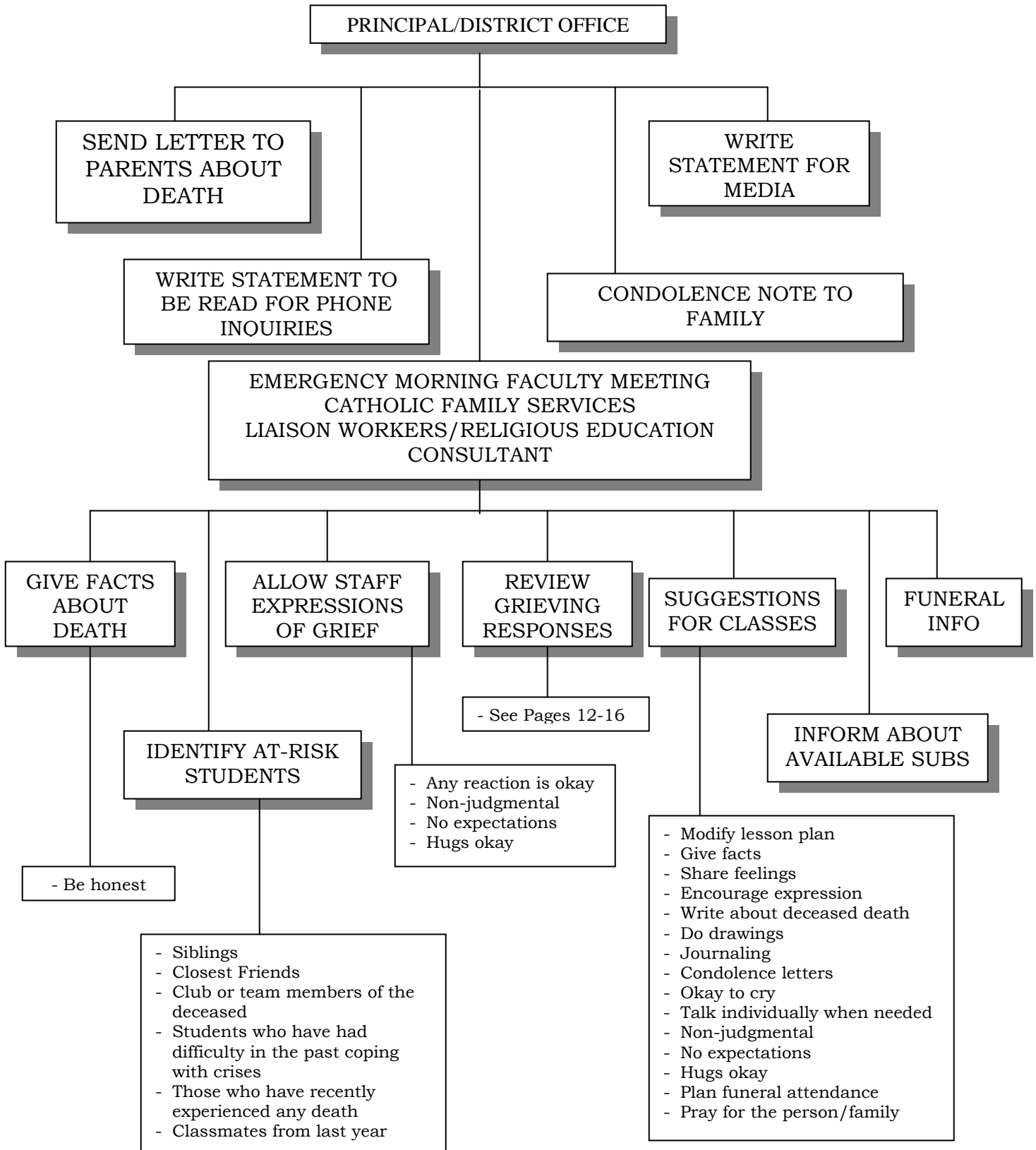
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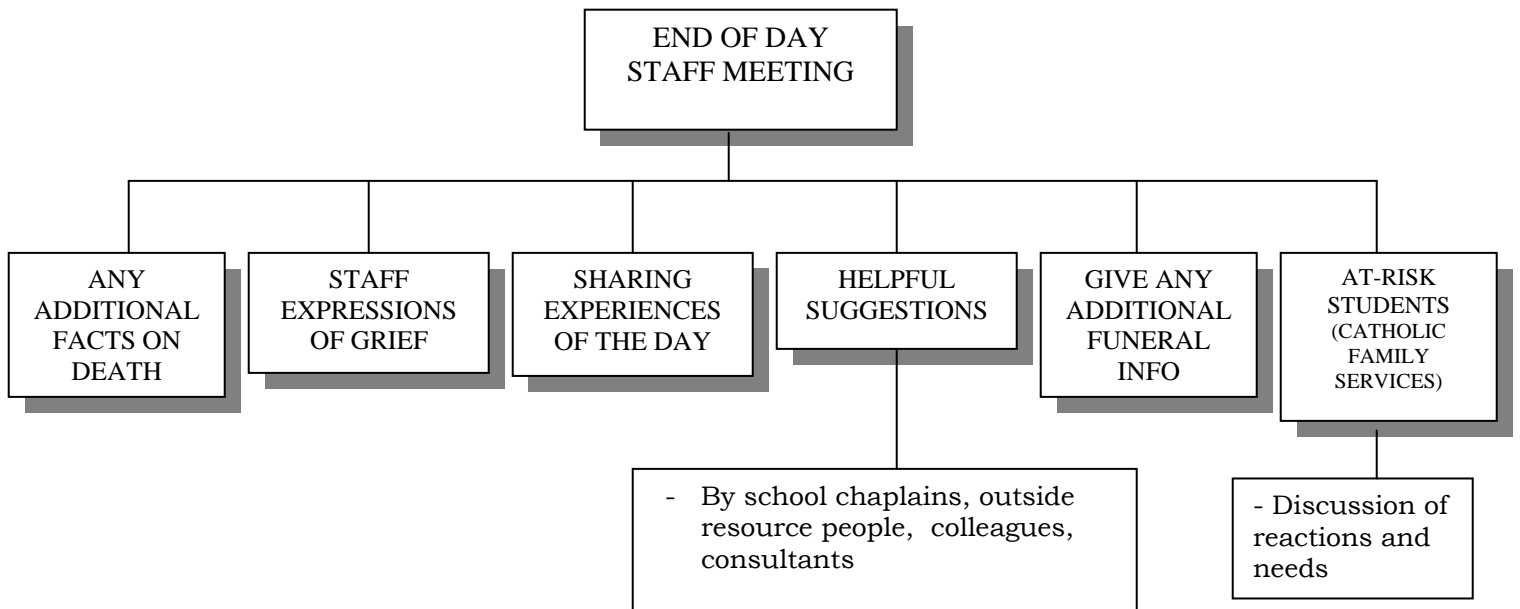
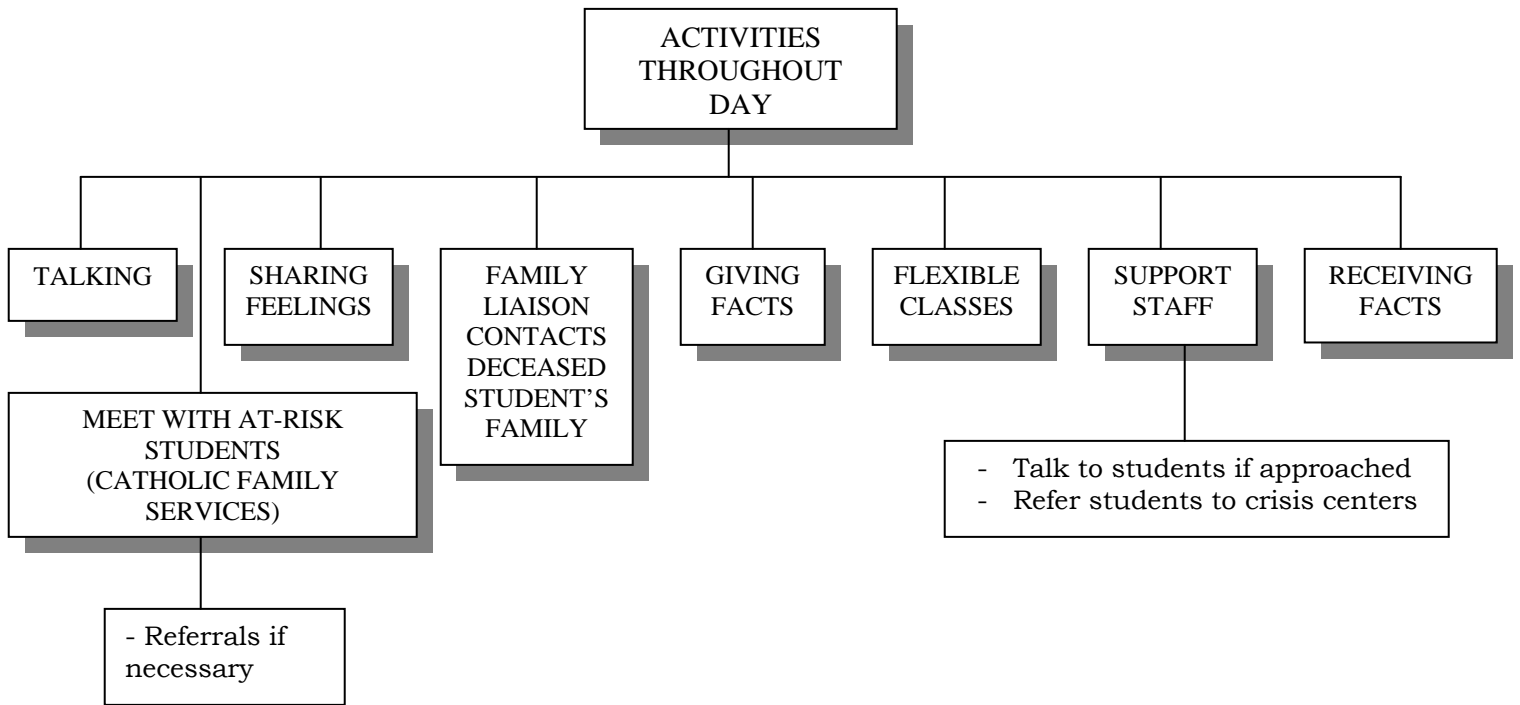
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ACTION PLAN

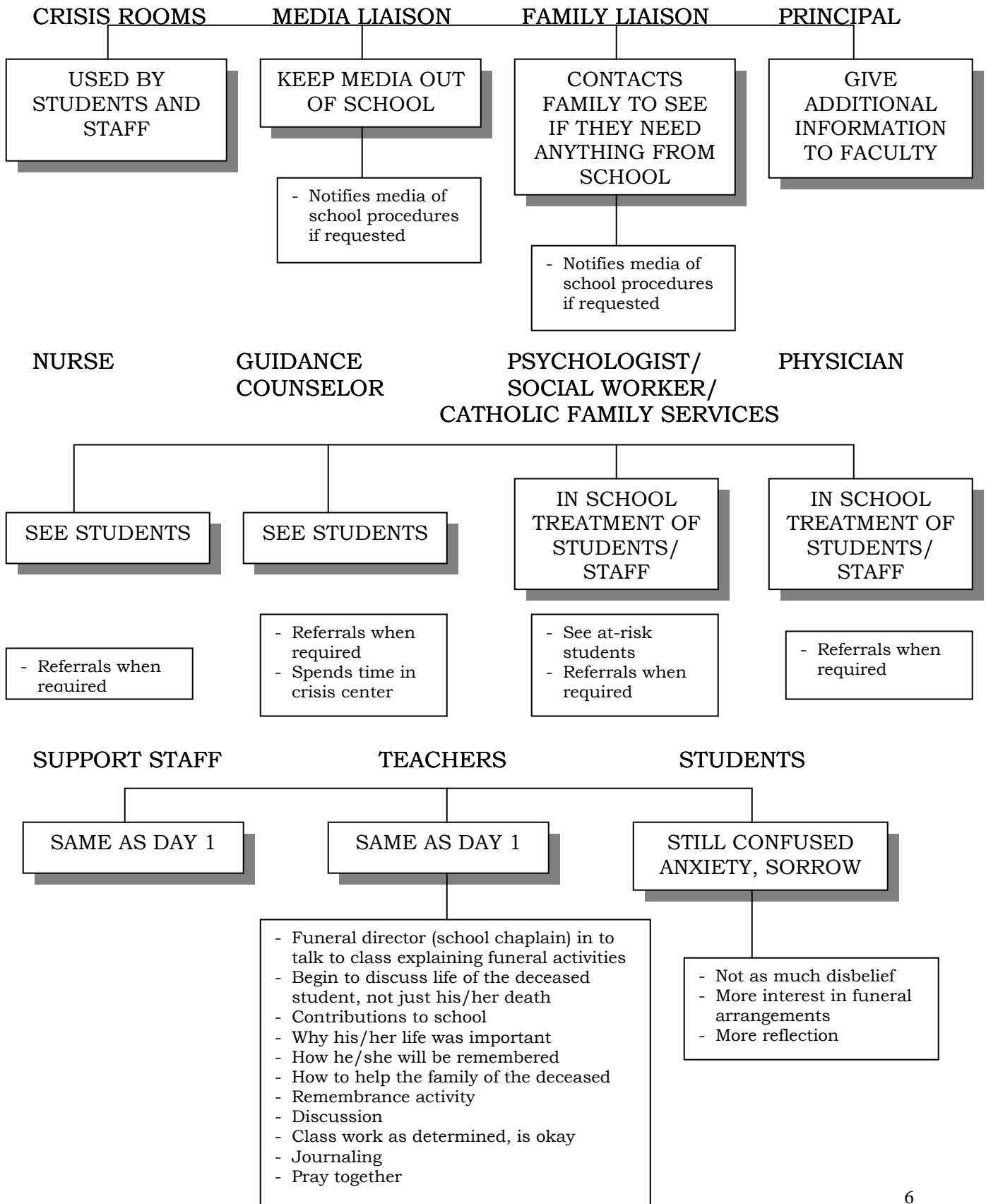
STAFF: FIRST DAY OF CLASSES



STAFF: FIRST DAY OF CLASSES CONTINUED



STAFF: SECOND DAY OF CLASSES



STAFF: THIRD DAY OF CLASSES

DAY OF FUNERAL

STAFF/STUDENTS/
CATHOLIC FAMILY
SERVICES GO TO
FUNERAL

AFTER FUNERAL, ALL ATTENDING GET TOGETHER FOR TALKING, JUST TO SHARE FEELINGS, GOOD IDEA TO HAVE CLERGY PRESENT. IF CLASSES ARE CONDUCTED AFTER THAT, DO NOT EXPECT MUCH PARTICIPATION BY THESE STUDENTS. ALSO TEACHERS WILL NOT BE AS PREPARED OR AS EFFICIENT.

THOSE NOT ATTENDING

DISCUSSION IN CLASSES AS NECESSARY.
BACK TO GIVING CLASSWORK.

IF THE FUNERAL IS NOT ON THIS DAY, BUT THE NEXT DAY OR ANOTHER DAY IN THE FUTURE, ALLOW DISCUSSION IN CLASS BUT INTRODUCE MORE CLASS WORK, THEN IMPLEMENT ABOVE ACTIVITIES ON DAY OF FUNERAL.

AFTER THIS DAY

A SUITABLE SPACE AND/OR GUIDANCE COUNSELOR'S/CATHOLIC FAMILY SERVICES OFFICE CAN ACT AS CRISIS ROOMS. SPECIAL ROOMS CAN NOW BE RETURNED TO PREVIOUS USE.

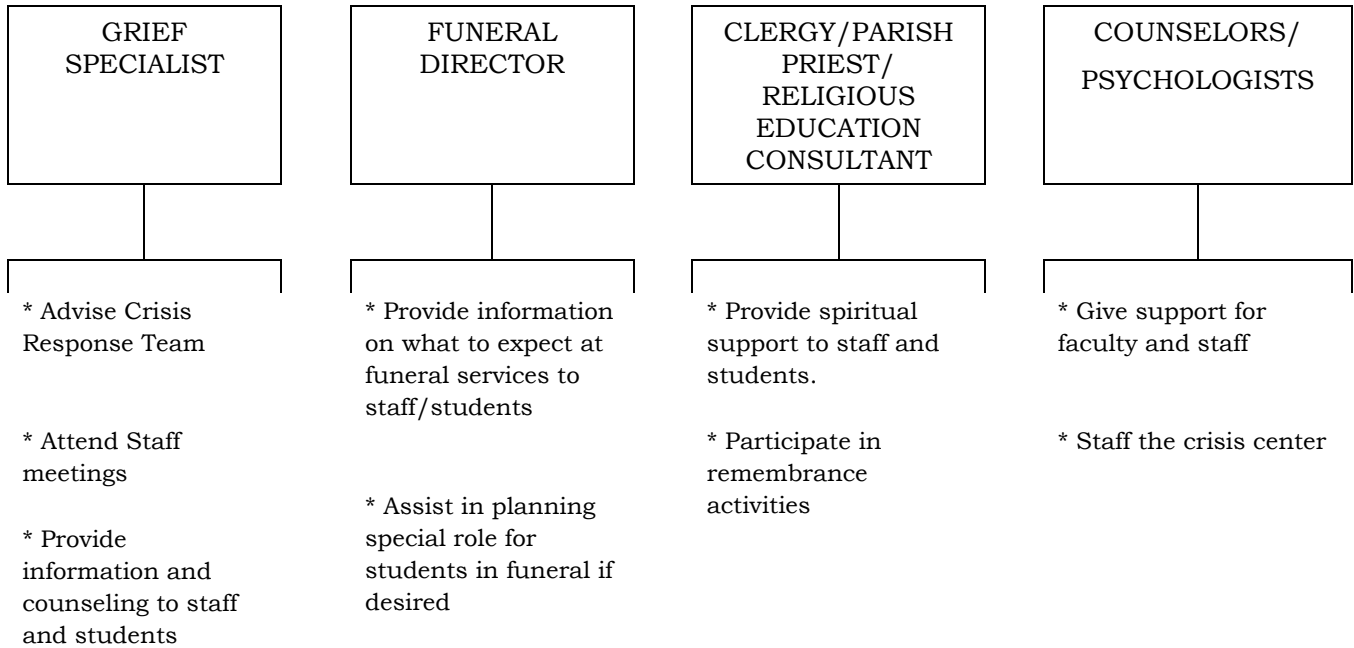
RESPONSIBILITY GUIDE

PRINCIPAL	CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM	TEACHERS	GUIDANCE COUNSELORS/ CATHOLIC FAMILY SERVICES/RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CONSULTANT
* Receive notification of death	* Initiate phone tree	* Read announcement	* Staff the crisis center(s)
* Verify information	* Notify family liaison	* Modify classes	* Talk with students
* Notify Superintendent and request assistance	* Call outside consultants	* Talk with students * Pray with students	* Clarify misinformation
* Notify Crisis Response Team, calls meeting	* Contact community resource people	* Clarify misinformation	* Encourage students to express feelings
* Notify media liaison	* Contact student leaders	* Activities to encourage expression of feelings	* Express own feelings
* Schedule special staff meeting * Pray with staff	* Open Crisis Centers * Distribute sample of prayers	* Express own feelings	* Give grief information
* Hire substitute teachers	* Distribute literature	* Give grief information	* No judgment of grief
* Write announcement to be read in classes	* Notify librarian to put grief books on reserve	* No judgment of grief	* Give priority to referrals
* Write phone inquiry statement	* Attend faculty meetings	* Activities to encourage remembering deceased	* Support students
* Attend special staff meetings	* Plan Community Meeting/Involve Catholic Family Services Staff	* Referrals when necessary	* Use support resources for self
* Make announcement to school		* Support students	* Make referrals to psychologist, M.D./school chaplains
* Write and send letter to parents		* Use support resources for self	* Contact parents if necessary
* Notify other principals		* Condolence note to family	* Attend funeral if desired
* Grant release time for funeral attendance		* Have in-school and outside resources talk with classes	
* Condolence note to family		* Attend funeral if desired	
* Attend funeral if desired			

RESPONSIBILITY GUIDE CONTINUED

<p>SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST SOCIAL WORKER/CATHOLIC FAMILY SERVICES</p>	<p>SCHOOL NURSE (f available)</p>	<p>PHYSICIAN (if available)</p>	<p>FAMILY LIAISON</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Primary referral * In-school treatment of students * Staff counseling and education * Complete student assessments * Make referrals to physician or community agency * Contact parents * Attend funeral if desired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Care for physical needs * Allow students to express emotions * Provide comfortable location * Make assessment of students * Make referrals * Attend funeral if desired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * See students * Make assignments * Make referrals * Contact parents * Attend funeral if desired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Contact family * Offer help * Obtain needed information * Inform of school procedures * Help to gather personal items of deceased student * Attend funeral if desired * Keep in contact with family after the funeral
<p>MEDIA LIAISON</p>	<p>SUPPORT STAFF</p>	<p>LIBRARIAN</p>	<p>STUDENTS</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Only person to talk to media * Notify media that you are the contact person * Keep media out of school * Attend funeral if desired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Listen to students if approached * Take students to Crisis Center * Make referrals * Attend funeral if desired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Put appropriate reading and A/V material on reserve * Listen to students if approached * Take students to Crisis Center * Attend funeral if desired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Talk with faculty and staff * Express feelings * Pray together with/for one another * Use support network * Condolence notes to family * Participate in remembrance activity planning * Attend funeral if desired

OUTSIDE CONSULTANTS/COMMUNITY RESOURCE PEOPLE RESPONSIBILITY GUIDE



1. Introduction

- A. Discuss the facts
- B. Discussion of Loss Reactions
 - 1. Recognition of feelings - Teachers discuss their feelings if possible to open up the process for students to express their feelings.
 - 2. Have students write down their feelings - a quiet time of 5 minutes for students to identify their feelings. Please note: Writing doesn't always work for everyone. Sometimes there is a struggle with using hands.
 - 3. Some "why" questions to God may be asked.

2. Ideas for Discussion

- A. Reaction to loss

We tend not to talk about death in our society and this does not help.

The range of feelings you may be experiencing and what you can expect to feel in the next few days may run the gamut.

Grief is an expression of love.

There is a wide range of "normal" feelings.

If you examine how you feel at this moment, you may feel relieved that someone is talking about emotions and death.

You may be feeling really angry that you have to sit here and listen to things about loss and death. You may feel insulted that we're even talking about this. These are normal feelings.

Everything from being numb to being very angry and acting out is normal. You may move away from the numbness to some other feelings.

Anger is an interesting emotion that all of us experience with a death, and the anger may be for any number of reasons.

3. Dealing with Loss

A. Dealing with your own feelings

1. What are your reactions to death and loss? Are you able to talk freely? With whom? When? It's important to allow yourself to deal with it. It's OK to cry – you may need to cry.
2. How are you going to look after yourself after experiencing a loss?
 - Let yourself talk to someone else.
 - Write a journal.
 - Acknowledge your feelings.
 - You will need time to talk, reminisce, share treasured moments, and laugh at experiences shared with an individual.
 - Verbalize as much as possible. Music, situations, clothing, pictures may trigger feelings – allow yourself to experience them.
 - Be willing to be comforted. Parents and friends can help you through with their experiences.
 - Take one day (one minute) at a time. Don't focus on the lifetime before you, just getting through the next 24 hours.
 - Grieving is normal and healthy. When you are through it, reach out to others who need a friend like you.
 - Pray – let God know your feelings, needs, etc.

B. Helping each other deal with loss

Each of us experience a loss from our own perspective. Those who have had a recent loss may react to this situation in a different manner.

You need to recognize how you feel and you need to look at how others feel also. It's going to be really important for all of you to support one another. How are you going to care for each other in the next little while?

How can you be of help to others?

- being there
- being supportive
- model good listening skills, it will encourage others to do the same.
- sit and listen. Give others an opportunity to use your ear.
- don't judge. Acknowledge their feelings and allow them to live through their own pain.
- be sincere. Don't pretend or exaggerate your feelings.

- any feelings are OK - sometimes we think others are acting/reacting in inappropriate ways. We must keep in mind that everyone deals with loss in the only way they know how.

Other places to get help:

- family and friends
- adults you trust - a relative, coach, scout leader
- family doctor
- teacher
- school counselor
- minister, priest
- social services
- Mental Health
- Crisis Line
- counseling services, hospital
- Catholic Family Services

C. Saying good-bye

It's important to say good-bye in a manner that you find appropriate.

1. Funeral

- Public recognition of the deceased, heightens the reality of death.
- Funerals make it "OK" to show emotions related to death.
- Signals the end of the death, after the funeral people try to get back to normal. However, family and friends often need extra support after the funeral, when support systems tend to disappear.
- Funerals can be a source of strength because friends and relatives gather.
- Viewing the body is one of the hardest but healthiest things to do.
- Seeing is believing (you may or may not have a chance to do this).
- You can go to the funeral to support your friends even if you didn't know the deceased.

2. If you can't go to the funeral, other ways to say good-bye:

- 2 minutes of silence
- send a card
- write a letter to the family/friends of the deceased

- write a letter to the deceased, say good-bye, and let them know how you feel
- keep a journal
- pray for the person, family, etc.

3. Things to say to people who've had a loss:

In an effort to find the right thing to say, we often at times don't say anything at all to a grieving person. The best things to say are simple, honest and straightforward.

"I'm sorry about your _____'s death"

"I've heard about your loss and want you to know that I am concerned and want to help you"

"I hurt for you"

"I don't know what to say"

"You have my deepest sympathy"

"Can I pray with you"

Avoid cliches and easy answers. Don't attempt to minimize the loss. Just your presence, your being there is more important than anything you could say. Avoid saying things like:

"It will be okay"

"Time heals everything"

"God took her home"

"I know just how you feel"

D. Getting on with normal life

Going through the grieving process after a death is a growing experience. Encourage the person to focus on life and not death by involving them in day-to-day activities. Loss generates a lot of energy, and if all that energy is turned inward it can be destructive. Be there for the person several weeks and months after the funeral; this is the time you will be needed and appreciated the most.

Later, areas of concern for the person may include: Anniversary of death, holidays, birthdays, dating a new person, guilt and fear of death.

Slowly, eventually, the pain eases and the person enters the stage of acceptance. Living begins to again carry small joys. The loss is still deep, but the sharpest pain is gone.

1. Normal Grief Reactions

Feelings

- Sadness, may or may not be expressed by crying
- Anger: resulting often from frustration at not being able to prevent death or at the deceased for leaving
- Guilt: about what happened or did not happen
- Anxiety: feeling unsure about how to carry on living and heightened awareness of own mortality
- Loneliness
- Edginess and irritability
- Fear of dying or contracting illness
- Shock
- Yearning
- Relief: after a painful, lengthy illness
- Numbness
- Resentment/blaming: towards God for the loss

Physical Symptoms

- Hollowness in the stomach, nausea
- Tightness in the chest
- Over sensitivity to noise
- Sense of unreality
- Sexual disturbances – impotence, menstrual changes
- Irregular heart beat
- Breathlessness
- Weakness in the muscles
- Dryness in the mouth
- Lack of energy
- Digestive upsets – constipation, diarrhea

Thoughts

- Disbelief
- Confusion, inability to concentrate or make decisions
- Sense of presence of the deceased

- Preoccupation with thoughts about the deceased
- Hallucinations, visual and auditory

Behaviors

- Sleep disturbance, inability to get to sleep or stay asleep
- Appetite disturbances
- Absentmindedness
- Social withdrawal from other people, lack of interest in current affairs
- Dreaming of the deceased, normal dreams and nightmares
- Avoidance of reminders of deceased person
- Crying, sometimes uncontrollably for long periods
- Treasuring objects belonging to the deceased

2. Signs of Complicated Grief

- Intense grief long after the loss
- Intense grief triggered by a minor event
- Predominance of loss themes
- Holding on to possessions
- Radical lifestyle change
- History of depression (and low self esteem)
- Imitating the deceased
- Self-destructive thoughts and behaviors
- Long-standing difficulty with holidays or anniversaries
- Physical symptoms or phobias
- An inability to go to the funeral or graveside

Three situations in which complicated grief is more likely

- Death was sudden and unanticipated
- A lot of ambivalence in relationship (love vs. hate)
- Abnormal dependence on the relationship

3. Pathological Symptoms in Children

- Persistent anxious periods long after the loss
- Accident proneness
- Persistent anger, hostile outbursts that are destructive
- Excessive possessiveness of the surviving parent
- Becomes excessively self-reliant, refuses any help
- Won't talk about the dead person and won't let others talk about it
- Speaks only in either positives or negatives

Prayer Support

COMMEMORATIONS FOR THE DEAD

Response: Lord, Hear our Prayer

In his great love,
the God of all consolation gave us the
gift of life.

May God bless you with faith
in the resurrection of his Son,
and with the hope of rising to new life.
R.

To us who are alive
may God grant forgiveness,
and to all who have died
a place of light and peace. R.

As you believe that Jesus rose from the
dead,
so may you live with him for ever in joy.
R.

May almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the Son + and the Holy
Spirit. R.

Most merciful God,
whose wisdom is beyond our
understanding,
surround the family of N. with your
love,
that they may not be overwhelmed by
their loss,
but have confidence in your goodness,
and strength to meet the days to come.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

Lord of all gentleness,
surround us with your care
and comfort us in our sorrow,
for we grieve at the loss of this [little]
child.

As you washed N. in the waters of
baptism
and welcomed him/her into the life of
heaven,
so call us one day
to be united with him/her
and share for ever the joy of your
kingdom.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS: OLD TESTAMENT

ECCLESIASTES 3:1-11

There is a season for everything, a time for every occupation under heaven:

A time for giving birth,
a time for dying;
a time for planting,
a time for uprooting what has been planted.
A time for killing,
a time for healing;
a time for knocking down,
a time for building.
A time for tears,
a time for laughter;
a time for mourning,
a time for dancing.
A time for throwing stones away,
a time for gathering them;
a time for embracing,
a time to refrain from embracing.
A time for searching,
a time for losing;
a time for keeping,
a time for discarding.
A time for tearing,
a time for sewing;
a time for keeping silent,
a time for speaking.
A time for loving,
a time for hating;
a time for war,
a time for peace.

PSALM 62

In God alone is my soul at rest;
my help comes from him.
He alone is my rock, my stronghold,
my fortress; I stand firm. R.

In God alone be at rest, my soul;
for my hope comes from him.
He alone is my rock, my stronghold,
my fortress; I stand firm. R.

In God is my safety and glory,
the rock of my strength.
Take refuge in God, all you people.
Trust him at all times.
Pour out your hearts before him
for God is our refuge. R.

PSALM 23: The Lord is my Shepherd

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
In verdant pastures he gives me repose;
Beside restful waters he leads me;
he refreshes my soul.
He guides me in right paths
for his name's sake.
Even though I walk in the dark valley
I fear no evil; for you are at my side
With your rod and your staff
that give me courage.

You spread the table before me
in the sight of my foes;
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Only goodness and kindness follow me
all the days of my life;
And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
for years to come.

PSALM 103

The Lord is compassion and love,
slow to anger and rich in mercy.
He does not treat us according to our sins
nor repay us according to our faults.

As parents have compassion on their children,
the Lord has pity on those who fear him;
for he knows of what we are made,
he remembers that we are dust.

As for us, our days are like grass;
we flower like the flower of the field;
the wind blows and we are gone
and our place never sees us again.

But the love of the Lord is everlasting
upon those who hold him in fear;
his justice reaches out to children's children
when they keep his covenant in truth.

SCRIPTURE READINGS: NEW TESTAMENT

A Reading from the First Letter of John

Think of the love that the Father has lavished on us,
by letting us be called God's children;
and that is what we are.
Because the world refused to acknowledge him,
Therefore it does not acknowledge us.

My dear people, we are already the children of God
but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed;
all we know is, that when it is revealed we shall be like him
because we shall see him as he really is.

This is the Word of the Lord.

A Reading from the Holy Gospel According to John

There are many rooms in my Father's house.

Jesus said to his disciples:

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God still, and trust in me. There are many rooms in my Father's house;
if there were not, I should have told you.
I am going now to prepare a place for you,
and after I have gone and prepared you a place,
I shall return to take you with me; so that where I am
you may be too.
You know the way to the place where I am going."

Thomas said, "Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" Jesus said:

"I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one can come to the Father except through me."

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

SCRIPTURE READINGS: COMMON PRAYERS

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father,
who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
for thine is the kingdom
the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen

Hail, Mary

Hail, Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee;
blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb,
Jesus

Holy Mary, mother of God,
pray for us sinners
now and at the hour of our death.
Amen.