



Montezuma-Cortez High School

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A QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL

10/21/16

Dear Parents:

This letter is to inform you of an unfortunate death of a student in our community that is touching our school. Today, we had members of the District Crisis Counseling Response Team at school working with our staff and students. Administration and counselors will be available next week to assist with any needs of staff and students. They will answer questions and assist you with support in dealing with your own and your child's grieving process.

Parents are encouraged to:

- Talk about the loss. This gives your child permission to talk about it, too.
- Ask questions to determine how your child understands the loss, and gauge their physical and emotional reactions.
- Listen patiently. Remember that each person is unique and will grieve in his or her own way.
- Be prepared to discuss the loss repeatedly. Your child should be encouraged to talk about, act out, or express through writing or art the details of the loss as well as their feelings about it, about the deceased person, and about other changes that have occurred in their lives as a result of the loss.
- Help children understand the event, ensuring that they do not blame themselves or others for the situation.
- Provide a model of healthy mourning by being open about your own feelings of sadness and grief.
- Create structure and routine for your child so they experience predictability and stability.
- Acknowledge that it will take time to mourn and that bereavement is a process that occurs over months and years. Be aware that normal grief reactions often last longer than six months, depending on the type of loss and proximity to the child.
- Take advantage of school and community resources such as counseling, especially if children and youth do not seem to be coping well with grief and loss.
- Discuss resources for your child to utilize: 1-877-542-SAFE (Safe2Tell encourages students to voice their concerns and take responsibility for keeping themselves and others safe).

This is a tremendous loss for our school and community. It will take time and support to get through this very difficult situation. If you would like to contact the school to discuss further support, please contact Amanda Higgins at (970) 565-3722 ext. 2126. You may reach me at ext. 2120, if I can be of additional support.

Jason Wayman

Jason Wayman E.d.D.