

SAMPLE PARENT LETTER
SUPPORTING DOCUMENT TO
THE IDAHO SCHOOL RESPONSE GUIDELINES FOR SUICIDE AND SUDDEN DEATH

Dear [Parent(s)/Caretaker(s)],

Death is a sad and tragic event, and the sudden death of our student/staff, (Name), has touched both students and faculty here at (School).

Based on the information provided to us by the coroner and the family, (student name) died by suicide on (day, month, year).

[OR]

(Student name) died on (day, month, year). According to the coroner the official cause of death is not yet determined.

Mr. and Mrs.(deceased student's parent's names) request that students (may attend/do not attend) the funeral. Donations may be sent in care of (appropriate contact).

[If known] The funeral arrangements are as follows:

(Date, time and location) (Include dismissal protocol.)

Since the news of the death, the school has implemented a crisis response plan to help the students and staff respond to this unfortunate death. In conjunction with colleagues from (community or other agencies), the school (continues to provide/has provided) professional support available to all students. In addition, students continue to meet with staff from our counseling and social work departments.

In the days and weeks ahead, students may have questions and concerns relating to the death and are going to require your support at home and our continued support here at school as they work through their feelings and grief. Although we cannot predict how any child may react, we can be sensitive and aware, both at home and at school, of the common reactions experienced by grieving (adolescents/children). Be aware that (children/adolescents) may express deep emotions using social media such as MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, etc., or search for information about suicide online.

If you feel your child is having difficulty and may benefit from additional support, please feel free to contact (name of Crisis Team Leader), your child's guidance counselor, or me so the school can be aware of your needs and the needs of your child. We are also supported by local mental health professionals and can provide you with referrals as needed. In addition, if you are interested in attending a parent/caretaker meeting, please contact (name) at (phone number) for further information and registration. You may find more resources at www.spanidaho.org.

As the school community continues to cope with the loss of (student/staff name), we invite your participation in the healing process. Please feel free to contact the school at any time with questions or concerns. (include school phone number)

Sincerely,
(School Principal)