DISTRICT LETTERHEAD

Dear Parents/Caregivers, Date

I am sorry to inform you that a staff person/student/friend, (NAME), at (SCHOOL NAME) has died (DAY/DATE). (Insert what information can be shared about the cause and circumstances of the death. Only share factual information that is has been approved for release by the authorities. Never share graphic information and, if death by suicide, never share the means. For example, “John Smith died in a car accident last night” is appropriate. In general, COVID-19 deaths can be stigmatizing so we discourage naming the cause of death at the present time. Identifying COVID-19 may result in stigmatization and bullying for family members.

Death can be difficult for us to understand, especially when it is sudden. We may feel a variety of emotions: shock, sadness, or confusion. What is most important is that we care for and support each other.

The Crisis Response Team at (SCHOOL NAME) has made plans to respond to the emotional needs of all students (Spell out what is being done: grief counseling, classroom support, Regional Crisis Team, and referrals to support service staff and community based organizations.) A virtual memorial page has been set up to remember (NAME) and can be accessed at this link: (LINK).

Students have been informed and staff members will be available to provide support as needed. To access one of our school helping professionals, please contact (give contact information). There are many community-based resources as well, some of which are attached. (Be sure to attach your community mental health resource guide.)

If your family has experienced a death or similar loss recently, the death of (NAME) may bring up feelings about that death. While this may be a normal experience, we want to provide assistance if needed. Please let your child’s (teacher or counselor) know if there is any additional information the school should be aware of so we can provide the support your child needs.

This difficult time can be stressful and confusing. A sudden death may be disturbing to you as well as your child. It is for this reason that we especially want you to know of our care and support.

Sincerely,

(PRINCIPAL’S NAME)