**Sample email structure for loss related to COVID-19**

**Please feel free to use these sample letters as a guideline in writing a personal letter to your community.**

**Initial Parent/Staff email**

This is an incredibly important email and I wish that we could be together instead of sharing this information via email. Today, we learned of the unexpected passing of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ member of our community and we will miss \_\_\_\_\_\_ dearly. The family has given us permission to share that \_\_\_\_\_\_ death was related to the COVID-19 epidemic and we are saddened to know that this illness has taken one of our community members. This is an unimaginable loss for \_\_\_\_\_ family and I have extended our deepest sympathy to them. At this time, we do not have information about arrangements but will let you know when they become available.

Under ordinary circumstances, we would meet and grieve as a school community and offer in person support and resources to our staff, students and families. Attached to this email, you will find several resources that may be helpful in talking to your children about COVID-19 as well resources related to talking with children about a loss. You will also find the contact information for our school counselors and we encourage you to email them to touch base so that they can set up a phone call or communicate with you by your preference.

On behalf of our school community, I will send a card/flowers to \_\_\_\_ family and will continue to touch base with them throughout the coming days to offer our support and to let them know we are thinking of them. If you would like to send a card to the family, feel free to mail it to the school address and I will make sure it is sent to the family. During these difficult times, we often suggest that adults or children write memories they may have had about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and what made them special in their lives. This is often helpful to the family to see just how important their loved one was to so many others. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ passing brings to light the realities of this horrible disease and while we cannot be together at this time to remember \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ together, we will create a plan to honor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ memory when it is safe to do so.

Please continue to stay safe and healthy and do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to speak further.

Sincerely,

**Attachments to consider:**

NASP: [When Grief/Loss Hits Close to Home: Tips for Caregivers](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/mental-health-resources/addressing-grief/when-grief/loss-hits-close-to-home-tips-for-caregivers) ([pdf](https://www.nasponline.org/Documents/Resources%20and%20Publications/Resources/Crisis/When_Grief_and_Loss_Hits_Close_to_Home_Tips_for_Caregivers.pdf))

NASP: [Addressing Grief: Tips for Teachers and Administrators](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/mental-health-resources/addressing-grief/addressing-grief-tips-for-teachers-and-administrators) ([pdf](https://www.nasponline.org/Documents/Resources%20and%20Publications/Resources/Crisis/Addressing_Grief_Tips_for_Teachers_and_Administrators_FINAL.pdf))

NASP: Helping Children Cope with Loss, Death, and Grief (downloadable [PDF)](https://www.nasponline.org/assets/documents/Resources%20and%20Publications/Handouts/Safety%20and%20Crisis/GriefWar.pdf)

Coalition to Support Grieving Students: Supporting Grieving Students During a Pandemic – A guide to using the Coalition to Support Grieving Students materials (downloadable [PDF](https://www.schoolcrisiscenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Supporting-Grieving-Students-During-a-Pandemic-guidance-for-Coalition-website.April-5-2020.pdf))

Additional resources can be found on the [Parent/Family Resources page](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1DQ8i9mSriHHchwoTKlYlW5rI_7YYVGLVyJYfpO5EgpQ/edit?usp=sharing)

**Letter Modified for Family that has not given permission for release of Health info:**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ School Community,

This is an incredibly important email and I wish that we could be together instead of sharing this information via email. Today, we learned of the unexpected passing of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ member of our community and we will miss \_\_\_\_\_\_ dearly. At this time, we do not have the answers as to the conditions of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_’s passing, but it is important to focus on the fond memories you may have of him/her. This is an unimaginable loss for \_\_\_\_\_ family and I have extended our deepest sympathy to them. At this time, we do not yet have information about arrangements but will let you know when they become available.

Under ordinary circumstances, we would meet and grieve as a school community and offer in person support and resources to our staff, students and families. Attached to this email, you will find several resources that may be helpful in talking to your children about a loss. It is important at times like these that we do not speculate or persist rumors on the cause of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_’s death. We respect the family’s right to privacy, and hope you will honor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_’s life by doing the same. Also attached, you will also find the contact information for our school counselors and we encourage you to email them to touch base so that they can set up a phone call or communicate with you by your preference.

On behalf of our school community, we will send flowers to \_\_\_\_ family and will continue to touch base with them throughout the coming days to offer our support and to let them know we are thinking of them. If you would like to send a card to the family, feel free to mail it to the school address and I will make sure it is sent to the family. During these difficult times, we often suggest that adults or children write memories they may have had about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and what made them special in their lives. This is often helpful to the family to see just how important their loved one was to so many others. While we cannot be together at this time to remember \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ together, we will create a plan to honor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ memory when it is safe to do so.

Please continue to stay safe and healthy and do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to speak further.

Sincerely,

**Attachments to consider:**

NASP: [When Grief/Loss Hits Close to Home: Tips for Caregivers](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/mental-health-resources/addressing-grief/when-grief/loss-hits-close-to-home-tips-for-caregivers) ([pdf](https://www.nasponline.org/Documents/Resources%20and%20Publications/Resources/Crisis/When_Grief_and_Loss_Hits_Close_to_Home_Tips_for_Caregivers.pdf))

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**Possible Follow up email wording for Staff**

I wanted to follow up to check in with all of you regarding the passing of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Please continue self care practices that are meaningful to you and do not hesitate to reach out to myself or a colleague for support. To experience a loss during such an already difficult time requires all of us to take care of each other and stay mindful of how we can support one another. Thank you for all your efforts to support our students and families during this time.

We will continue to offer support to the family and I will be in touch if any arrangements or activities are made to celebrate \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ life.

**Possible Follow up email wording for Parents**

**\*It may be important to send a follow up email to parents- particularly if the loss was acknowledged during an online class or just to reassure parents that the district continues to support the community.**

**(possible examples)**

I wanted to follow up to let you know that during your student’s online class today, the teacher acknowledged the passing of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with the students. The students all showed a great deal of sympathy and maturity during this very difficult conversation and we are incredibly proud of how well they supported each other. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or to one of our counselors should you have any questions or concerns.

I wanted to follow up to check in with all of you regarding the passing of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. During this difficult time, we are reminded of how strong our community is and how well we can continue to support each other. We will continue to offer support to the family and I will follow up with any information regarding arrangements or memorial activities should they be made available.