

Commemorations/Memorials

Definitions: In this policy, Commemoration(s) also means Memorial(s).

Commemorations

It is the intent of the Solano County Office of Education (SCOE) to accept donations of commemorations to bring closure to a period of grieving and to serve as a point from which to move on. Commemorations should reflect the needs of the SCOE community.

For each commemoration, it is important to think about the precedent that is being set and the long-term implications. These guidelines are intended to assist administrators in concert with their teams. Administrators and their teams should work with families and/or assist individuals or groups who want to commemorate students and employees and be prepared to offer acceptable options. Student commemoration will be permitted for students who were enrolled in a SCOE program at the time of the student's death. Employee commemorations will be permitted for employees that were employed by SCOE at the time of the employee's death.

While greatly appreciating suitable commemorations, the County Superintendent (Superintendent) discourages any commemorations which may directly or indirectly impair SCOE's commitment to providing equal educational opportunities for all SCOE students. Before approving a commemoration, the Superintendent or designee shall consider the following:

Student commemorations:

1. The student(s) must have been enrolled in a SCOE program at the time of the student's death.
2. Whether enough time has passed so that the immediate impact of the loss has subsided but occurs before the opening of the next school year.
3. If a temporary location (i.e., student's locker or desk) is established, specify time limits (1 week) and that items left will be shared with the family.
4. Allow student and staff opportunities to attend services within the community.
5. Within the classroom, activities that address the loss will be conducted as is developmentally appropriate with the support of the building crisis team.
6. What precedent is being set and the long-term implications.
7. The commemoration has a purpose consistent with SCOE's vision and philosophy.
8. Implies endorsement of any business or product.

Employee commemorations:

1. The employee(s) must have been employed by SCOE at the time of their death.
2. Whether enough time has passed so that the immediate impact of the loss has subsided but occurs before the opening of the next school year.
3. If a temporary location (i.e., office or desk) is established, specify time limits (1 week) and that items left will be shared with the family.
4. Allow student and staff opportunities to attend services within the community.

Policy 3290.1 (Continued)

5. What precedent is being set and the long-term implications.
6. The commemoration has a purpose consistent with SCOE's vision and philosophy.
7. Implies endorsement of any business or product.

The Superintendent, or designee, shall carefully evaluate any conditions or restrictions imposed by any donor(s) considering SCOE's philosophy and operations. If the Superintendent, or designee, determines SCOE will be unable to fully satisfy the donor's conditions, the gift shall not be accepted.

The acceptance of donations shall follow Administrative Policy 3290.

Commemoration Committee

The purpose of the Commemoration Committee is to offer consistent, considered responses to commemoration requests when a student or employee dies suddenly during their time with SCOE.

Using a committee to approve any requests for a commemoration helps to:

1. Reduce strain on individual employees to make a decision in the face of pressure.
2. Ensure consistency across the agency.
3. Ensure that best practice is followed regarding commemorations.

Commemoration Committee Membership

The Commemoration Committee will be appointed by the Superintendent for each requested commemoration event. The committee will be comprised of:

1. At least one member of the Superintendent's Cabinet.
2. The administrator of the site on which the commemoration is to occur or be placed.
3. The Director in charge of Facilities, Maintenance, and Operations.
4. Any other person(s) the Superintendent decides to appoint.
5. There is no specific length of term for committee members.

Commemoration Committee Member Roles and Responsibilities

Committee Members will be asked to:

1. Obtain education on best practices regarding commemorations.
2. Meet within 1 week of a commemoration request.
3. Review the requests for a commemoration.
4. Consider the implication of any permanent commemoration, including:
 - a) Impact on students and their parents
 - b) Impact on employees
 - c) Impact on SCOE operations
 - d) Cost of maintaining the commemoration
 - e) Impact on functionality and maintenance of the site where the commemoration will be placed.

Policy 3290.1 (Continued)

5. Provide a written response to the party requesting a commemoration.
6. Maintain documentation of requests made and decisions regarding requests via the Commemorations Team's Site.
7. Maintain documentation on physical commemorations that have been created.
8. Respond to requests to move, alter, remove, or change existing physical memorials, and document the actions taken.

Commemoration Committee Scope of Practice

The Commemoration Committee is limited in scope. The only determinations are on commemorations of students or employees as defined under the Commemorations section of this policy. The Commemoration Committee has no jurisdiction in actions taken to enshrine donors or regular facilities-naming conventions. Commemorations that involve the naming of a facility shall follow the Solano County Board of Education's Policy 9000.32.

Commemoration Committee Working Parameters

1. The Superintendent will indicate the Chair of the committee at the time of appointing members.
2. The committee will work to achieve consensus in developing a response to a commemoration request whenever possible. A simple majority rules in the event that consensus cannot be reached.
3. Review information provided in advance of meetings or post meeting; attend meetings prepared for the discussion.
4. Actively participate in discussions. Offer perspectives, constructively challenge thinking, and provide ideas and suggestions for next steps.
5. The Chair will call meetings and facilitate discussions. The Chair may choose to maintain committee documentation or assign a secretary to perform these tasks.
6. The decision of the Commemoration Committee is non-contestable and final regarding requests for new commemorations. The Superintendent may overturn a committee decision regarding pre-existing commemorations.
7. If the committee rejects a request for a commemoration, the committee should offer alternatives to the party requesting a commemoration.

Forms of Commemorations

All commemorations will be privately funded.

Suggested options include:

1. Purchase of library books, school supplies, and equipment with the approval of the Commemoration Committee. Donated books may include a bookplate, and equipment may include an engraved plate no larger than two by six inches. Wording on the plates will be limited to "Donated in Memory of" or "In Memory of" and the student's/employee's legal name, and year of donation. Any engraved plate other than bookplates will be removed at the end of ten years and offered to the family.

Policy 3290.1 (Continued)

2. Plants on school grounds. The Commemoration Committee will approve the type and placement of the planting. A moveable ground marker no larger than twelve by six inches may accompany such plantings. The engraving on the marker will be limited to "Donated in Memory of" or "In Memory of" and the student's/staff member's legal name and year of donation. Any engraved markers will be removed at the end of 10 years and offered to the family. In no instance shall the plant be a tree of any kind.
3. Contributions by students/employees to commemorations designated by the family (e.g., Cancer Society, MADD, local charities, etc.)
4. Allowing students/employees to sign a poster including memories of the deceased that is then shared with family.

Unacceptable commemorations include those which:

1. Violate any federal, state, local, or SCOE laws, regulations, policies, or guidelines.
2. Contradict SCOE's mission or vision.
3. Significantly alter the conduct of a regular school instructional day.
4. Significantly alter school activities or the school activities schedule.
5. Require the retirement or discontinued use of SCOE property. This may include such items as monuments, statues, benches, etc.
6. Infringe on the separation of church and state.
7. Require the use of public funds for purchase, development, or maintenance beyond the normal care and maintenance of SCOE properties.
8. Trees of any kind.
9. Any item that is affixed to the building (i.e., plaques), unless approved by the Solano County Board of Education.
10. Creating t-shirts with the student's image on them.

Graduation

1. Graduation is a time to recognize the many years of work and achievement of the seniors.
2. Any students who die during their senior year may be acknowledged at graduation (with parent approval) prior to the conferring of diplomas for the graduating class.
3. If a posthumous diploma is to be awarded, the name should be read, and the diploma presented to the family member by an employee. The family member shall sit in a designated area for the presentation. Students should not be involved in the presentation.
4. In the case of any students who have died during their high school career, their parent may request that they be acknowledged in a similar fashion at the graduation of their class.

Existing Commemorations

Any commemoration in existence at the time these guidelines are adopted, whether in compliance with these guidelines or not, may be removed 10 years after the death of the student/employee involved and offered to the family.

Notice of Address Change

Family members of deceased students/employees are encouraged to inform SCOE of any address changes so SCOE may return any commemorations to them.

Right to Refusal and Discontinuation of Commemorations

SCOE reserves the right to accept or reject any and all commemorations donated or purchased in memory of a student(s) or employee(s). Furthermore, SCOE has the right to cause all commemorations currently on SCOE properties to be discontinued.

Attachment: Commemoration/Memorial Request Form

Legal Reference:

CALIFORNIA STATE CONSTITUTION

Article 16, Section 6 Public finance

GOVERNMENT CODE

8314 Use of public resources

PENAL CODE

424 Crimes against the revenue and property of this state

Policy Cross-Reference:

3290 Gifts Grants Bequests and Donations

Solano County Board of Education Policy Cross-Reference:

9000.32 Naming of Facility



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COMMEMORATION/MEMORIAL REQUEST FORM

Upon request, the Commemoration Committee shall consider erecting a monument in honor of students, staff members, and/or community members. *The Commemoration Committee reserves the right to accept or reject any and all commemorations donated. Accepted commemorations will be visible for no longer than five school years. After the designated memorial period, all reasonable efforts will be made to return commemoration items to the respective family members.*

Please submit completed forms to the Commemoration Committee at the address on the top of this form.

Name of Individual Being Requested for Consideration: _____

Date of passing: _____

Name of Individual Submitting Request: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: (____) _____ Cell Phone: (____) _____

Email: _____

Relationship to Individual Being Requested for Consideration: _____

Individual being considered: Student Community Member
 Staff Other: _____

1. Please describe the contributions this individual has made that you want the Commemoration Committee to consider when reviewing this request. *(Attach additional pages if necessary)*

OFFICE OF THE SOLANO COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Series 3000 – BUSINESS AND NONINSTRUCTIONAL OPERATIONS

Policy 3290.1 (Continued)

2. Describe the requested commemoration/memorial:

3. Requested location for the commemoration/memorial: *(Please include a site map that details the specific location of your request.)*

4. How will the costs associated with this request be covered?

For Commemoration Committee Use:	
Date request received: _____	Date of Committee review: _____
Date reviewed with Individual's family: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Not Approved
Date Applicant informed: _____	Rationale (if applicable): _____
Committee Chair Signature: _____	