



## Parent Newsletter

We would like to thank you for the care you have provided to your child/ren as well as the thoughts and messages the school has received in light of the sudden passing of three of our grade 12 students. This has been a difficult week for our KSS community. 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.

As a follow up from our email on Wednesday May 26, 2021 we would like to provide you with some updates on activities happening within the school as well as some information on grief and community supports.

### **SCHOOL UPDATES:**

**Post Critical Incident Response Team** – The District PCIR team has been on site and will remain at KSS all next week and as long as necessary as well as our school counsellors, Mrs. Curran, Mrs. DeMug, Mrs. Corrado and Mrs. Price.

**In Memory Owls** – On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of next week, Mrs. Price and Mr. Franklin will be providing an opportunity for students to write a memory or message on an Owl picture. The Owl messages will be put together and presented to the families after Wednesday.

**Dry Grad Week** – Has been moved from next week (May 31<sup>st</sup> to June 4<sup>th</sup>) to June 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to the Dry Grad Parents for making this change.

**Indigenous Grad** – The KSS Indigenous Grad and Blanket Ceremony has been moved from June 9<sup>th</sup> to June 23<sup>rd</sup>. Thanks to the Indigenous department and all our families for being flexible with this change.

**Grad Ceremony** – The walking of the stage with individual families watching will continue to take place on June 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. The final video of the Graduation will be streamed on June 24<sup>th</sup>.

**KSS PAC Support** – The PAC has organized a GoFundMe account for the families.

<https://ca.gofundme.com/f/kss-supports-3-grad-families-in-their-loss>

**Grad Class of 2021 Instagram Post** - *When the Humboldt Broncos tragedy struck, we honoured them by placing hockey sticks on our doorsteps. The KSS students and staff are doing the same, hanging black/yellow ribbons, KSS Gear, or KSS colours on the doorsteps to help everyone heal, honour the students and move forward. We may not be able to gather, but this way, we can pay tribute to these three young lives lost, show their families they are not alone, and feel a part of the community during this tragic time. Please share, and participate if you can.*

**Memorial Site** – We are concerned about students gathering at the site of the accident due to location, parking, and the road way. We have been working with the RCMP about keeping our students and community members safe. If your child/ren do attend the site, please remind them to use all safety precautions (COVID protocols, crosswalks, appropriate parking etc).

## **Helpful Hints for Parents/Guardians of Grieving Teens**

When a tragedy happens, parents/guardians play a key role in helping their children move through the grieving process. Children and teens are still developing their capacities for understanding and coping with life and death. Listed below are some suggestions and information that may be helpful to you in supporting your child/ren.

- Children/Teens may experience emotions and feelings such as anger, irritability, guilt, fear, hopelessness, and/or sadness with thought processes reflective of disbelief, confusion, difficulty concentrating, and/or inattentiveness;
- Common physical responses may include a disruption in normal eating and sleeping patterns, nightmares, restlessness, and somatic complaints such as headaches or stomach aches should be monitored to see if further intervention is required;
- Supportive adults can continue to avoid speculation about unknown details, and validate, acknowledge, and attempt to answer all questions; no questions are silly questions. It's also okay to say "I don't know". Do not be afraid to speak about feelings and emotions. While this may be difficult for both you and/or your child/ren, it's important to have direct conversations;
- Monitor social media use;
- Maintain normal routines as much as possible;
- Be available and provide physical and emotional comfort, or if your child/ren is seeking some alone/quiet time, allow them to process as they need;

## **Community Support and Resources**

The School Counsellors and members of the PCIR team are available to provide contact information on multiple community agencies. In addition, you can review the KSS Counsellors website for community resources if you require further support.

[http://www.kss.sd23.bc.ca/ProgramsServices/Departments/Counselling\\_Department/Pages/default.aspx#/=](http://www.kss.sd23.bc.ca/ProgramsServices/Departments/Counselling_Department/Pages/default.aspx#/=)