***SCHOOL LETTER HEAD***

DATE

Dear Parent and/or Guardian,

It is with deep sorrow that I inform you about a recent and unexpected loss to our NAME OF SCHOOL Community. On DATE AND TIME OF DEATH, NAME OF DECEASED TEACHER, one of our beloved GRADE LEVEL teachers has died. HIS/HER death is sure to raise many emotions, concerns, and questions for our entire school community, especially for the students who have or had NAME OF DECEASED TEACHER as their teacher.

We recognize that a death of an adult in your child’s life, especially one he or she may see everyday, can be very upsetting. Sunnyside Unified School District has a Crisis Intervention Team made up of professionals trained to help with the needs of students, parents, and school employees at difficult times such as this. Today, at NAME OF SCHOOL, we had counselors available for all students and staff who may have needed or wanted help in dealing with the grieving process. We will continue to provide counseling services throughout the week. We encourage you, as parents, to also feel free to use our resources available at the school.

We have enclosed some information that may be useful to you in helping your child at home. If you would like additional information or need assistance with your family’s grieving process, please do not hesitate to contact NAME OF COUNSELOR, our School Counselor, at PHONE NUMBER.

Even though we are saddened by this great loss to our NAME OF SCHOOL Community, let us remember NAME OF DECEASED TEACHER in our hearts as the POSITIVE DESCRIPTIVE TRAITS teacher that HE/SHE was.

Sincerely,

PRINCIPAL SIGNATURE

**How to Help your Child**

Experiencing, witnessing, or even hearing of a traumatic incident may affect a child or adult in a variety of ways; therefore, it is very important that children be given ample opportunities to ask questions and to talk about their reactions. For some students a death of someone they know may remind them of some other loss in their lives. For other children this may be their first encounter with death.

When reacting to a traumatic incident, a child may display behaviors such as the following:

* Clings close to adults
* Displays regressive behaviors
* Appears not to be affected
* Thinks about it privately
* Asks a lot of questions
* Appears frightened
* Appears agitated and angry
* Appears sad and withdrawn
* Displays difficulty sleeping
* Stomach aches and/or headaches

We suggest you listen to your children. It is important that you deal honestly and directly with their questions. Referring to death as going to sleep or passing away may result in confusion. It is appropriate that you use the word “death.” Should you have difficulty approaching this issue or if you would like additional information about talking to your children about death, we have material available at school. Below are some other suggestions that parents may find useful in helping your child:

* Be a good listener. Listen carefully for any misconceptions or distortions the child may have.
* Provide physical closeness. Spend extra time putting your child to bed. Talk and offer reassurance.
* Encourage children to ask questions and to discuss, write or draw their feelings.
* Provide play and fun experiences to relieve tensions.