



Lakewood Board of Education

200 Ramsey Avenue, Lakewood, NJ 08701

Main Office: (732) 364-2400 Fax: (732) 905-3687

Laura A. Winters, Superintendent of Schools

February 10, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Our school community is saddened to learn of the sudden and tragic death of Mrs. Sara Trahey, the Media Specialist at the Ella G. Clarke School. Mrs. Trahey was an outstanding Educator who cared very deeply about the success and wellbeing of each and every one of her students. We will all miss her very much!

In order to support our students during this difficult time, we have arranged to have counselors available during the school day to assist students and faculty with the questions and grief, which accompany such a difficult situation. Experiencing or even hearing of a traumatic incident such as this may affect a child or adult in a variety of ways; therefore, it is very important that students and teachers 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 others, this may be their first encounter with death.

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

- Cling closely to adults
- Display regressive behaviors
- Appear not to be affected
- Think about it privately
- Ask a lot of questions
- Appear frightened
- Appear agitated and angry
- Appear sad and withdrawn
- Display difficulty sleeping
- Stomach aches and/or headaches

We suggest that you make an extra effort to listen to your child during this time. It is important that you deal honestly and directly with any questions that he or she may have. Should you have difficulty approaching this issue or if you would like additional information about talking to your child about death, we have material available at school.



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Below are some other suggestions that parents may find useful in helping their child:

- Be a good listener.
- Listen carefully for any misconceptions or distortions your child may have.
- Provide physical closeness.
- Spend extra time with your child.
- Talk and offer reassurance.
- Encourage your child to ask questions and to discuss their feelings.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (732) 905-3633, if I can be of additional assistance to you and/or your child during this difficult time.

Respectfully,

Laura A. Winters

Laura A. Winters
Superintendent of Schools

c:
Kevin Campbell, Assistant Business Administrator
Moshe Bender, Board of Education President
Members of the Board of Education
General Counsel Michael I. Inzelbuch, Esquire