

Jennifer Lima
H7196
Support

I am writing today in support of H7196 which would require public school districts to adopt a policy for responding to the death of a student or staff member.

In 2022 the North Kingstown school community faced the sudden death of a long time teacher in the district. Nothing would have made this tragedy any easier to cope with, but the process that followed in this circumstance actually made things worse.

Expecting a school day to continue on as if nothing has happened is not best practice. Students and colleagues should be allowed time and space to grieve. And they should definitely not be required to take a sick day or miss class to attend the funeral.

I urge passage of this bill so that the next time a district experiences this, they will be able to focus on the people in their district, and not be worried about the procedure.

Please note that I am both a parent of a North Kingstown High School student, and a member of its School Committee. I am writing today in both capacities, but the views expressed are my own and should not be taken to not represent the committee or the district. Thank you.

Jennifer Lima
4 Hickory Drive East
North Kingstown, RI 02852