



*Preparing Every
Student for Success in
College, Career, and Life*

BETTY H. FAIRFAX HIGH SCHOOL
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(602) 764-9000

Chad E. Gestson, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Phillip Wooley, M.Ed.
Principal

November 30, 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians:

The Betty Fairfax High School community is dealing with a tragedy concerning the death of one of our students. The only information we have at this point is that the student passed away in his sleep. Our hearts and prayers go out to the family and friends of this young person. We join them in grieving their loss.

There is nothing worse than a young person being taken away so suddenly in the prime of their life. This 11th grade student was well-known on campus and the impact to some of our students and staff is crushing.

The impacted students have met together for support this morning, and we brought staff together for an emergency meeting. Our crisis management team mobilized early this morning to be ready to provide special counseling attention to the classes and classmates, and staff members which are most affected. Our professionals have planned activities in these support groups to help students with the grieving process. We will continue to offer these sessions as long as they are needed. We have offered similar employee assistant support for our staff.

When an incident such as this occurs, it is important for teenagers to express their feelings. Teenagers should accept their feelings as natural and be allowed to cry, talk about the loss or have a laugh. Encourage teenagers to talk and listen to each other. You should also engage in a conversation with your child, using open-ended questions to get them to talk, such as "How are you feeling right now?" or "How do you know the person?" Sometimes students feel the need to express themselves by writing or drawing. Because you know your child's experiences with tragedy or loss, be aware of how past experiences might impact their feelings now. Encourage your child to use the services offered at the school.

Remember, too, that the adults on campus are experiencing a great deal of emotions. Remind your students to be good to their teachers and staff who are upset.

Our intervention measures and professionally-trained specialists will continue to be available for our students and staff. We care deeply about each and every student, and have many resources available to serve their needs, both academically and emotionally. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this matter and our response to it, please do not hesitate to call me at (602) 764-9020.

Sincerely,

Phillip Wooley
Principal

Linda Abril

Alhambra

Bioscience

Bostrom

Trevor G. Browne

Camelback

Central

Cesar Chavez

Desiderata

Betty H. Fairfax

Franklin

Gifted & Talented

Carl Hayden

Maryvale

Metro Tech

Montessori

North

Phoenix Coding

South Mountain

Wilson