



## LILBURN MIDDLE SCHOOL

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December 2, 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Our school community was saddened to learn of the passing of our beloved Mr. Richard Kessler over the Thanksgiving Break. Mr. Kessler, who taught 7<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics, was an outstanding teacher who cared very deeply about the success and well-being of his students. We will all miss him very much!

Earlier today, we notified our students and staff today of this loss to our school community. Our counselors have been available all day, supporting our students and staff as they grappled with this news and they will remain available to them during this difficult time.

We know that the loss of a teacher will be difficult for our students and staff. For some of our students, this may be the first time they have lost someone they know. With that in mind, our counselors have provided the following information about helping students cope when they are grieving. Unfortunately, there are no quick fixes and our students may need additional support. Adolescents dealing with a loss 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
- Become agitated and angry
- Appear sad and withdrawn
- Display difficulty sleeping
- Suffer stomach aches and/or headaches

The following tips may be useful to you, as parents, as you support your child at home:

- 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.

If you find that your child needs additional help or wants to talk to someone about this loss, please do not hesitate to contact the school, as our school counselors are well-trained in helping children with difficult issues such as this. The days ahead will be difficult for our school. Please keep Mr. Kessler's family and our students and staff members in your thoughts and prayers.

Sincerely,

Yvette Arthur  
Lilburn Middle School Principal