



# Holly Area Schools

*Excellence in Action!*

October 27, 2023

Dear Holly High School Families,

I want to start off by acknowledging our students, staff, families, and community as they have done a wonderful job coming together to support one another during this difficult time following the tragic loss of HHS Senior, Deegan Walton, and HHS Teacher, Tony Coggins. Our hearts continue to go out to the Walton and Coggins Families.

I also want to take a moment to send out a special thanks to all of our outside resources for coming in and supporting us this past week. We are truly humbled by the outpouring of support from our nearby school districts, including Clarkston, Lake Orion, Fenton, Lake Fenton, Linden, Hartland, Grand Blanc, and Kearsley.

We are also appreciative of the community support and the support of local mental health agencies, including Easterseals, Heartland Hospice, Common Ground, Oakland Community Health Network, Giesken Counseling Services, and Mid-Michigan Therapy Dogs.

Moving forward, the school is dedicated to continuing our support for students. Beginning the week of Monday, October 30th, students will have the opportunity to participate in grief support groups. These small groups, consisting of 10 students or fewer, are designed to support students struggling from a traumatic loss. ***In order for students to participate in these grief support groups, students are required to obtain signed parent permission and turn the forms into the office.***

Please see the information below, including links to the parent permission forms. Physical copies of these permission forms can also be found in the school's front office.

- **Heartland Hospice** - Heartland Hospice will be offering grief support for students beginning next week. Sessions are 60 minutes and will run for 6 consecutive weeks. Their goal in working with schools is to provide a supportive atmosphere where students can identify and deal with their feelings of grief and loss. We will be running a group on **Mondays at 3:00 p.m.** There are currently still spots available for this group session, which will begin meeting on Mondays once we have enough participants sign up. The group session meeting on Tuesday, October 31st, at 9:30 a.m. is now full. However, Heartland is willing to offer additional groups starting in December if the need arises. Please see the following link for more information: [HHS - Heartland Hospice Grief Support Group](#)

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## Holly High School

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**Joel Smith**, Principal

**Codie Lakin**, Assistant Principal

**Melissa Wachowski**, Assistant Principal

- **Easterseals Morc** - This grief support group is led by an Easterseals Morc clinician featuring a curriculum centered around grief and loss. This group will run for 6 sessions during school hours, with each session running for 45-60 minutes. The group is formulated specifically for the school setting and will provide students with a safe and confidential space to process recent loss. There are currently still spots available for the first group session, which will occur on **Monday, November 6th, at 9:45 a.m. Permission slips are due by Friday, November 3rd, in order to participate.** Please see the following link for more information: [HHS - Easterseals Grief Support Group](#)

Our school counselors will continue to be available to support our students if they are struggling throughout the course of their school day. Please encourage your child to seek out their counselor by going to the counseling office if a situation arises where they would benefit from additional support.

Again, we are so thankful for all of the support that has been provided. Please reach out to the high school if you have any questions regarding these supports.

Sincerely,

Joel Smith, Holly High School Principal