**[SAMPLE LETTER TO STAFF – UNCONFIRMED SUICIDE]**

Date: [DATE]

To: All Staff

From: [NAME OF SCHOOL] Crisis Team

Re: [NAME OF DECEASED]

The recent death of [NAME OF DECEASED] *(has OR is expected to make)* a significant impact on our entire school community. Our crisis team has been mobilized to respond to this tragic event. On [DATE], [NAME OF DECEASED]¹ died by [insert factual information known such as “from an overdose of prescription medication” or “from drowning”. If the family agreed, the following can be inserted “which at this point is felt consistent with suicide”]. We expect a variety of reactions to this loss from our students, parents/caregivers, and members of our staff.

To assist all members of our school community, an emergency staff meeting will be held at [TIME] on [DATE] in the [MEETING LOCATION]. At that time, our crisis team will provide further details and address questions. We will also discuss how to present the information to our students. In the meantime, please refer all inquiries from outside sources to [NAME OF THE MEDIA OR COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR].

If you are asked questions by individual students prior to the time of our meeting, you can acknowledge that this death has occurred. However, please avoid discussion of details; tell them that the school staff will provide additional information when it becomes available. Please refer any student who appears to have difficulty coping or is expressing considerable distress to [NAME OF COORDINATOR OF COUNSELING SERVICES or A MEMBER OF THE COUNSELING STAFF].

As this tragedy has affected all of us in different ways, we encourage you to also seek assistance, as needed, from [NAME OF COORDINATOR OF COUNSELING SERVICES or A MEMBER OF THE COUNSELING STAFF].

Emergency Staff Meeting

Time:

Date:

Location:

If you have any questions or concerns before the meeting, please contact [NAME OF CRISIS TEAM CHAIR].

[EXAMPLES OF INFORMATION TO INSERT IN THE OPENING PARAGRAPH]:

*¹John Smith, one of our 9th grade students*

*Mrs. Jones, who taught 7th grade English*