



Ashland School District

INSPIRING LEARNING FOR LIFE

Ashland School District Community,

It is with an incredibly heavy heart that I write to you this afternoon.

Late last night, five of our Ashland High School students were involved in a serious car accident in Ashland. Tragically, two of our students lost their lives. Three additional students remain hospitalized.

There are no words sufficient for a moment like this. Our entire Ashland School District community is grieving which is why this is being sent to all of the Ashland School District rather than only the high school. Our thoughts and deepest condolences are with the families, friends, classmates, and loved ones who are facing unimaginable loss.

At this time, details regarding the accident remain under active investigation by the Serious Traffic Accident Reconstruction (STAR) Team, and we are limited in what we can share. We ask that our community respect the privacy of the families as they navigate this profound tragedy.

What we can share is this: we will surround our students and staff with care.

Counselors, mental health professionals, and district support staff will be available on the high school campus tomorrow and throughout the week to provide space for students and adults to process, grieve, and seek support. Additional supports will be made available at other sites should the need arise. We encourage families to speak openly with their children and to reach out to us if additional assistance is needed. Grief can present itself in many ways. It can look like sadness, anger, confusion, or withdrawal and each response is valid.

In moments like this, our schools are more than buildings. They are communities. They are places where we hold one another up. We will continue to communicate as we are able and as information is confirmed. In the meantime, I ask that we lean into what makes Ashland strong: compassion, unity, and care for one another.

Please hold these families close in your thoughts. Take care of your children. Take care of yourselves. And take care of each other.

With profound sympathy,

Dr. Joseph Hatrick
Superintendent