



DRYDEN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.O. Box 88
Dryden, NY 13053
Main Office (607)844-8694
District Office (607)844-5361
FAX (607)844-4733

February 7, 2012

We are writing with great sadness to inform you that one of our seniors, Jack Gallagher, has died. Our thoughts and sympathies are with his family and friends.

All of the 6-12 students were given the news of the death by their teacher in homeroom this morning. We have included a copy of the press release that was read to them. The cause of death was suicide. We want to take this opportunity to remind our community that suicide is a very complicated act.

Members of our Crisis Response Team were available to meet with students individually and in groups today, and will be available over the coming days and weeks. Please contact the school office if you feel your child is in need of additional assistance; we have a list of school and community mental health resources. As a parent, we encourage you to discuss the recent events. We also urge you to monitor your child's social networking as the students are using Facebook and Twitter to share their feelings and questions. If students are gathering at your home, please supervise them and communicate openly with the other parents.

Information about the funeral service is as follows: Calling hours will be at Perkins Funeral Home on Thursday, February 9th from 3:00pm to 6:00pm and the funeral service will be at the Freeville Methodist Church on Friday, February 10th at 11:00am. If your child wishes to attend, we strongly encourage you to accompany him or her to the service. Since the funeral is scheduled during school hours, students who wish to attend will need written parental permission to be released from school. Additionally, the school will be holding a memorial service for high school students and MS-HS staff to honor Jack's life on Thursday, February 9th at 10:00am in the auditorium. This will be optional for high school students to attend. Parents of high school students may also attend.

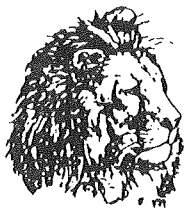
The school will be hosting a meeting for parents and others in the community within the next two weeks. Members of the Crisis Response Team along with staff from Suicide Prevention & Crisis Services of Tompkins County (272-1616), will be present to provide information about common reactions following a suicide and how adults can help youths cope. They will also provide information about suicide and mental health in adolescents, including risk factors and warning signs of suicide, and will address attendees' questions and concerns.

Please do not hesitate to contact one of the school counselors with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Karen Rachetta
High School Principal

Sandra R. Sherwood
Superintendent



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NEWS RELEASE

2/7/2012

The Dryden School community is shocked and deeply saddened by the news of the death of Jack Gallagher, a popular and talented senior at Dryden High School. Jack's musical talent and great compassion touched the lives of so many in our schools and community. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and all the people who knew and loved Jack. The school will have counselors available to help students and staff work through this tragic loss.