

Press Release



Battle Ground Public Schools

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Counselors assist grieving students



David J Suetta

About two dozen counselors were on the Battle Ground High School campus Friday meeting with grieving students following the off-campus suicide Thursday of David J. Suetta, a popular junior who was a member of the school's ROTC and who wanted to be an Air Force paratrooper.

The counselors, from several schools and social agencies around Clark County, are part of SMART, the county-wide School Mobilization Assistance Response Team. SMART members are called on in situations such as the death of a student or teacher to be available on campus to talk to students and employees.

“They’ve been busy,” a counseling office employee said at mid-day Friday. “Lots of our kids are needing help today.”

David J. Suetta, born April 4, 1994, had been a member of the Air Force Junior Reserve Officers Training Corp (ROTC) at BGHS for a year, having joined at second semester of his sophomore year.

“He loved it,” his mother, Tami, said Friday as she and her husband, Ron Suetta, talked about their son. “His goal was to go into the Air Force after high school and become a paratrooper. His grandfather (Don Suetta of Amboy) was in the Navy. I think that was part of David’s motivation.”

She said David spoke often of ROTC and had high regard for the leaders, Col. Brian Brown and Chief Master Sgt. Chuck Shannon.

She said David, a former Motocross racer, had two motorcycles. He also regularly joined his dad and others on hunting and fishing trips.

Tami Suetta said some of David’s friends called him “cowboy” because of the boots and cowboy hat he often wore. Last summer, she said, he took up bull riding and “absolutely loved it. We were all nervous about it, but he was awesome. Once he made it the full eight seconds without being thrown off.”

She added, “He loved all his friends and family” and especially liked playing with his niece, Meadow, 2 and half. “He could converse with adults one minute and get down and play with Meadow the next,” she said.

David Suetta had two adult sisters, Shawna Suetta and Jennie Bryant, and a brother, Hunter, who attends Amboy Middle School. Plans for a service are pending.



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