

Olympia High teacher, who was also Bears' announcer, has died

BY LAUREN SMITH

lsmith@theolympian.com

Chris Sonnenstuhl, a special education teacher at Olympia High School, who also served as the school's announcer for football and basketball games, has died, the school announced Tuesday.

Olympia High principal Matt Grant wrote a message to the high school's community on his Facebook page just before 3:30 p.m. Tuesday. He was not immediately available for comment when contacted by The Olympian on Wednesday.

In his post, Grant said the news of Sonnenstuhl's passing would be shared with students by their teachers during first-period classes on Wednesday, the first day of school. A team of social workers and counselors was available in the school library to talk with students as needed.

Plans for memorial services have not been announced.

Olympia football coach Steve Davis said Wednesday the program has ordered stickers that show Sonnenstuhl's initials with a microphone, which the team will place on their helmets.

"The whole program is very saddened, and he will be deeply missed," Davis said. "He was a great announcer, not only for football, but basketball. He really got the fans engaged."

Longtime Olympia boys basketball coach John Kiley recalled Wednesday how Sonnenstuhl called the Bears' first playoff win, and said his colleague was excited for both football and basketball season this school year.

"I loved his passion," Kiley said. "As a Bear, he exemplified the blue and the blood. He absolutely loved Olympia sports. ... The loss is sudden, and a shock, and a big hit on the Olympia sports community."

"He was always such a positive guy. He would walk into the gym and was so excited for whoever we were playing, and whatever that contest meant, and he was hoping for big things. I am personally sad and sad for our school."