

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: FEBRUARY 21, 2024**

***In re: Nex Benedict***

On February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024, the Benedict Family sent their child, Nex Benedict, to Owasso High School, trusting, like any parent or family member should be able to, that it was a safe environment for their loved one. Millions of parents across America make the same decision each and every morning. While at Owasso High School, Nex was attacked and assaulted in a bathroom by a group of other students. A day later, the Benedict's beautiful child lost their life.

Many of the questions posed by friends, family, media and other concerned citizens are also top of mind for those left to honor Nex's memory. While various investigations are still pending, the facts currently known by the family, some of which have been released to the public, are troubling at best. We urge those tasked with investigating and prosecuting all potentially liable parties to do so fully, fairly and expediently. Notwithstanding, the family is independently interviewing witnesses and collecting all available evidence. The Benedict Family calls on all school, local, state and national officials to join forces to determine why this happened, to hold those responsible to account and to ensure it never happens again.

The family graciously accepts and appreciates the outpouring of support, thoughts and prayers from across the nation for the loss of their child. In the coming weeks and months they request that their privacy be respected and that they be allowed to grieve and deal with their new reality---a life without Nex. The Benedicts know all too well the devastating effects of bullying and school violence, and pray for meaningful change wherein bullying is taken seriously and no family has to deal with another preventable tragedy.

Lastly, the family asks that any threats, or acts, of violence, against students, employees and personnel, or any other persons associated with the Owasso Public Schools, cease immediately.