

Students

SUICIDE PREVENTION AND MENTAL HEALTH PREVENTION

Prevention and Instruction

The District's suicide prevention curriculum shall be designed to help student to:

1. Identity and analyze signs of depression and self-destructive behaviors and understand how feelings of depression, loss, isolation, inadequacy, and anxiety can lead to thoughts of suicide.
2. Identify alternatives to suicide and develop coping and resiliency skills.
3. Learn to share feeling and get help when friends are showing signs of suicidal intent.
4. Identify community crisis intervention resources where help is available and recognize that there is no stigma associated with seeking mental health, substance abuse, gender identity, or other support services.

Staff Development

1. Annual in-service suicide prevention training will be conducted in order for the district staff to learn to recognize the warning signs of suicidal crisis, to understand how to help suicidal youths, and to identify community resources. All staff will learn to identify potentially suicidal students, to take preventative precautions, and report suicide threats to the appropriate authorities. Training will be offered under the direction of trained district counselor/psychologists.
2. Staff shall promptly report suicidal threats or statements to the principal or to a trained district counselors/psychologist, who shall promptly report threats or statements to the student's parents/guardians and take appropriate action until the parent or guardian arrives.

Intervention

Immediate Intervention for a Suicide Threat or Attempt

When a suicide attempt or threat is reported, the principal or designee shall:

1. Ensure the student's physical safety by one of the following, as appropriate:
 - a. Securing immediate medical treatment if a suicide attempt has occurred.
 - b. Securing law enforcement and/or other emergency assistance if a suicidal act is being actively threatened.
 - c. Keeping the student under continuous adult supervision until the parent/guardian and/or appropriate support agent or agency can be contacted and has the opportunity to intervene.

THE STUDENT MUST NOT BE LEFT ALONE

2. Designate specific individual to be promptly contacted, including the school counselor, psychologist, nurse superintendent, and/or the student's parent/guardian, and as necessary, local law enforcement or mental health agencies.
3. Document the incident in writing as soon as feasible.
4. Follow up with the parent/guardian and student in a timely manner to provide referrals to appropriate services as needed.

5. Provide access to counselors or other appropriate personnel to listen to and support students and staff who are directly or indirectly involved with the incident at the school.
6. Provide an opportunity for all who respond to the incident to debrief, evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies used, and make recommendations for future actions.
7. Document the steps taken in the student's record.
8. Develop an effective plan for reintegration of the student into school following the crisis.

Intervention after a Death Suggested to be a Suicide

When a tragedy occurs and a student dies, the principle or designee shall:

1. Contact the Superintendent. District office staff will contact other schools and remind them to identify and provide counseling to any student who might have known or be connected in any way with the student who died.
2. Call an emergency staff meeting to relay known information and formulate appropriate procedures for supporting students, staff, and parents. The death should not be called a suicide. This is a legal determination that can only be made by the coroner's office. It should be referred to as a death or a tragic death.
3. Talk with students who were in class with the student by going to that classroom.
4. Contact other students who might know the student in direct, one-to-one conversations.
5. Provide counseling support to students. Contact additional psychologists/counselors to increase the available support. Have a place available for students to go to (Support Room) and walk around campus to be available for any student needing support. Counselors should follow the student's schedule and be available to assist the students and teachers in those classes. Students must be allowed to grieve, but there should be no large group gatherings such as an assembly. Students should not be allowed to congregate in groups without adult supervision. Identify any students who might be at risk and call them in to talk.
6. Contact the family to express condolences and to let them know what the school is doing. Ask when the family would like the student's personal items returned to them. The student's locker should be cleaned out and contents returned to the parents at an appropriate time.
7. Designate a spokesperson who will respond to questions and inquiries from the media.
8. School will be conducted as usual to the greatest extent possible. In no case should school be canceled.
9. Prepare a note to send home to parents indicating that a tragic death has occurred and that post intervention procedures and counseling has begun.
10. Schedule a parent meeting as soon as possible to help parents deal with the issue and to advise them how to help students.

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