



Book	Policy Manual
Section	800 Operations
Title	Suicide Awareness, Prevention and Response
Number	819
Status	Active
Adopted	August 17, 2015

Purpose

The Board is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its students and school community. This policy supports federal, state and local efforts to provide education on youth suicide awareness and prevention; establish methods of prevention, intervention, and response to suicide or suicide attempt; and to promote access to suicide awareness and prevention resources. [\[1\]](#)[\[2\]](#)[\[3\]](#)[\[4\]](#)[\[5\]](#)

Authority

In compliance with state law and regulations, and in support of the District's suicide prevention measures, information received in confidence from a student may be revealed to the student's parents/guardians, the building principal or other appropriate authority when the health, welfare or safety of the student or any other person is clearly at-risk. [\[6\]](#)[\[7\]](#)[\[8\]](#)[\[9\]](#)

Guidelines

The District shall utilize a multifaceted approach to suicide prevention which integrates school and community-based supports.

The District shall notify District employees, students and parents/guardians of this policy and shall post the policy on the District's website. [\[1\]](#)

SUICIDE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION EDUCATION [\[1\]](#)

Protocols for Administration of Student Education

Students shall receive age-appropriate education on the importance of safe and healthy choices, coping strategies, how to recognize risk factors and warning signs, as well as help-seeking strategies for self or others including how to engage school resources and refer friends for help.

Lessons shall contain information on comprehensive health and wellness, including emotional, behavioral and social skills development.

Protocols for Administration of Employee Education

All District employees, including but not limited to secretaries, coaches, bus drivers, custodians and cafeteria workers, shall receive information regarding risk factors, warning signs, response procedures, referrals, and resources regarding youth suicide prevention.

As part of the District's professional development plan, professional educators in school buildings serving students in grades six (6) through twelve (12) shall participate in four (4) hours of youth

suicide awareness and prevention training every five (5) years.[\[1\]](#)[10]

Additional professional development in risk assessment and crisis intervention shall be provided to guidance counselors, District mental health professionals and school nurses.

Resources for Parents/Guardians

The District may provide parents/guardians with resources including, but not limited to, health promotion and suicide risk, including characteristics and warning signs; and information about local behavioral/mental health resources.

METHODS OF PREVENTION[\[1\]](#)

The methods of prevention utilized by the District include, but are not limited to, early identification and support for students at risk; education for students, staff and parents/guardians; and delegation of responsibility for planning and coordination of suicide prevention efforts.

Suicide Prevention Coordinators

District-Wide –

A District-wide suicide prevention coordinator shall be designated by the Superintendent. This may be an existing District employee. The District suicide prevention coordinator shall be responsible for planning and coordinating implementation of this policy.

Building Level –

Each building principal shall designate a school suicide prevention coordinator to act as a point of contact in each school for issues relating to suicide prevention and policy implementation. This may be an existing District employee.

Early Identification Procedures

Early identification of individuals with one (1) or more suicidal risk factors or of individuals exhibiting warning signs, is crucial to the District's suicide prevention efforts. To promote awareness, District employees, students and parents/guardians should be educated about suicidal risk factors and warning signs.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations providing examples of risk factors and warning signs.

Referral Procedures

Any District employee who has identified a student with risk factors or warning signs, or who has an indication that a student may be contemplating suicide, shall refer the student for further assessment and intervention.

METHODS OF INTERVENTION[\[1\]](#)

The methods of intervention utilized by the District include, but are not limited to, responding to suicide threats, suicide attempts in school, suicide attempts outside of school, and completed suicide. Suicide intervention procedures shall be developed by the Superintendent or designee and may include the development of an emotional or mental health safety plan for students identified as being at increased risk of suicide.

The Superintendent or designee may approve suicide assessment instruments for use by trained mental health staff.

Parents/Guardians of a student identified as being at risk of suicide shall be notified by the school. If the school suspects that the student's risk status is the result of abuse or neglect, school staff shall immediately notify Children and Youth Services.[5]

METHODS OF RESPONSE TO SUICIDE OR SUICIDE ATTEMPT[\[1\]](#)

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations providing recommended guidelines for responding to a suicide threat.

The methods of response to a suicide or a suicide attempt utilized by the District include, but are not limited to:

1. Identifying and training the school crisis response/crisis intervention team.
2. Determining the roles and responsibilities of each crisis response team member.
3. Notifying students, employees and parents/guardians.
4. Working with families.
5. Responding appropriately to the media.
6. Collaborating with community providers.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations with recommended guidelines for responding to a suicidal act or attempt on school grounds or during a school-sponsored event.

Re-Entry Procedures

A student's excusal from school attendance after a mental health crisis and the student's return to school shall be consistent with state and federal laws and regulations.[2][11][12][13][15][16]

A District-employed mental health professional, the building principal or designee, or suicide prevention coordinator shall meet with the parents/guardians of a student returning to school after a mental health crisis, and, if appropriate, meet with the student to discuss re-entry and applicable next steps to ensure the student's readiness to return to school.

When authorized by the student's parent/guardian, the designated District employee shall coordinate with the appropriate outside mental health care providers.

The designated District employee will periodically check in, as needed, with the student to facilitate the transition back into the school community and address any concerns.

DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING[\[1\]](#)

District employees shall be responsible for effective documentation of incidents involving suicide prevention, intervention and response.

The designated employee shall document the reasons for referral, including specific warning signs and risk factors identified as indications that the student may be at risk. The designated District employee shall also document all interventions and services provided.

The Superintendent or designee shall be notified of at-risk students and provided with documentation prepared by the school.

Information and reports shall be provided, as appropriate, to guidance counselors, District mental health professionals and school nurses.

SUICIDE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION RESOURCES[\[1\]](#)

A listing of resources regarding suicide awareness and prevention shall be included in an administrative regulation developed by the Superintendent or designee.

Legal

[1. 24 P.S. 1526](#)

2. Pol. 103.1

3. Pol. 248

4. Pol. 249

5. Pol. 806

[6. 22 PA Code 12.12](#)

7. Pol. 207

8. Pol. 216

9. Pol. 236

10. Pol. 333

11. Pol. 113

12. Pol. 113.2

13. Pol. 113.3

15. Pol. 117

16. Pol. 204

Pol. 114

Pol. 146

Pol. 805

Administrative Regulation - 819-AR

[819_AR-2.pdf \(54 KB\)](#)

[819_AR-1.pdf \(110 KB\)](#)