

Grants Pass School District

Guide to Suicide Prevention, Intervention, and Postvention Procedures



If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call or text 988, or chat at 988lifeline.org. The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline is available 24/7 and offers compassionate care and support for anyone experiencing thoughts of suicide or self-harm, substance use, or any other kind of behavioral health crisis. You can also dial 988 if you are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support.

Senate Bill 52 (SB 52), also known as Adi's Act (ORS 339.343; OAR 581-022-2510), requires each school district school board to adopt a policy requiring a Student Suicide Prevention plan. These plans must be made available annually to students and the school district community and be posted on the district's website, if applicable. Grants Pass School District Policy [JHH](#) and [JHH-AR](#) are available online.

Quick Facts - What School's Need to Know

Take suicidal behavior SERIOUSLY EVERY time. Take IMMEDIATE action!
Know who is trained to conduct a screener at your school. Contact the School Screener and a building administrator to inform her/him/they of the situation. NO student expressing suicidal thoughts should be sent home alone or left alone during the screening process. You must provide supervision!
If there is a reason to believe a student has thoughts of suicide, do not send the student home to an empty house.

- School staff are frequently considered the first line of contact with potentially suicidal students. Most school personnel are neither qualified, nor expected, to provide the in-depth assessment or counseling necessary for treating a suicidal student. They are responsible for taking reasonable and prudent actions to help at risk students, such as staying with the student and getting them to a trained screener or administration.
- All school personnel need to know that they are required to refer at-risk students to trained professionals; the burden of responsibility does not rest solely with the individual "on the scene."
- **Research has shown that talking about suicide (whether in a training, classroom or 1 on 1), or asking someone if they are feeling suicidal, will not put the idea in their head or cause them to kill themselves.**
- School personnel, parents/legal guardians and students need to be confident that help is available when they raise concerns regarding suicidal behavior. Students often know, but do not tell adults, about suicidal peers. Having supports in place may lessen this reluctance to speak up when students are concerned about a peer.
- Advanced planning is critical to providing an effective crisis response. Internal and external resources must be in place to address student issues and to normalize the learning environment for everyone.

Confidentiality

School employees are bound by the laws of The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974; commonly known as FERPA. FERPA generally precludes schools from disclosing student information without first obtaining consent, but there are exceptions, including health and safety emergencies and communication with district staff who have a legitimate educational interest. Further, there are situations when confidentiality must NOT BE MAINTAINED, meaning that staff have a legal obligation to share information.

If at any time, a student has shared information that indicates the student is in imminent risk of harm/danger to self or others, that information **MUST BE shared immediately**. The details regarding the student can be discussed with those who need to intervene to keep the student safe. This is in compliance with FERPA and HIPPA.

Suicide Prevention

Staff Training and Education

All staff will receive training on the policies, procedures, and best practices for intervening with students and/or staff at risk of suicide.

Who	What	When
All District Staff	QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer)	Annually - initial training with follow up from and in house QPR trained staff member
	Access to and review of district suicide prevention policy and Plan	Annually through staff handbook and staff meetings
Crisis Response Staff - school counselors, social emotional counselors, behavior intervention specialists, psychologists, nurses, school administration, etc.	ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training)	As soon as possible after hire

Suicide prevention activities are best conducted in the context of other prevention efforts such as health and wellness curriculum, sexual violence prevention, drug awareness, unhoused youth, wraparound services, social-emotional learning, trauma-informed education, disability identification and services, and supports for underrepresented populations such as positive identity development and affinity groups. Prevention efforts are best characterized as being part of a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) where universal practices across domains are employed, increasingly intensive training and supports are engaged as screening, and intervention outcomes are evaluated.

Student Education and School Programs

All students K - 12 will receive direct instruction on social emotional learning/mental health and wellness promotion using restorative practices.

Students are provided with multiple opportunities to connect and engage throughout the school day, both in and out of class. Specific curriculum has been identified to be used in K - 5 classrooms, during health classes at the middle and high school, as well as through advisory and/or study hall periods. Outside of specified curriculum, some other prevention activities include:

- Positive messaging
- Positive Behavior and Intervention Systems (PBIS)
- School Based Health Center at GPHS
- Learning Centers (K-8)
- Gladiola Way onboarding class
- Naviance digital platform - finding interests and strengths for each student
- Clubs and organizations including affinity groups
- Student town halls (at GPHS)
- AVID - schoolwide system focused on building relational capacity and a culture of support
- School counseling supports including Social Emotional Counselors and Behavior Intervention Specialists

School Program	Grade Level
Second Steps Curriculum - part of health classes and curriculum	K - 8
Social/Emotional learning Curriculum including regulating emotions (i.e. AVID relational capacity, Why Try, Character Strong, etc.)	K - 12
Suicide Prevention Units completed in Health classes	6 - 12

Resources

Suicide Rapid Response - <https://www.linesforlife.org/srr/>

[OregonYouthLine.org](https://www.oregonyouthline.org) is a free teen-to-teen crisis support and help line. YouthLine is confidential to a point - while they will never share conversations had on the lines, they are mandatory reporters. If a young person is unable to agree to safety for themselves or another person, or if abuse is occurring, YouthLine contacts other agencies to ensure the best support and safety for the young person in crisis.

Teens are available to help daily from 4-10pm PST (adults are available by phone at all other times!):

- **Call: 877-968-8491**
- **Text: 839863**
- [Chat](#)
- [Email](#)

Suicide Intervention Protocol

Options is the state agency responsible for immediate action regarding youth suicide concerns. If a student presents suicidal ideation or attempts suicide, Options is to be contacted immediately. In addition, your lead Director should be notified.

1. If an Options Therapist is on site, involve them immediately. They are qualified to conduct an assessment immediately and to help intervene.

2. Call the Options **Mobile Crisis Unit** at (541) 474-5360.
 - ❖ **NOTE:** Options Mobile Crisis **only** goes to schools and agencies, not to homes. If a family is needing support at home for family members, please call 911 for police support.
3. Contact the student's parent and communicate the situation. Work with the parent to determine next steps.
4. Provide the parent with a copy of the [Mental Health Crisis Protocol](#).
5. Notify your lead Director of the situation and who was contacted at Options.
6. Document what is known about the student ideation or attempt to self harm. Log entry may be the most appropriate place to document. The [Suicide Screening Form](#) may be used by the Options therapist and/or the team intervening.
7. Continue working with the family and Options to support the student. **Prior to returning** to school, the student will need to have completed a Crisis Evaluation (either from the hospital or through Options). Options provides a copy of this evaluation to the parent.
8. Return to school (re-entry plan)
 - a) Request from the parent a copy of the Crisis Evaluation Plan completed by Options
 - b) Meet with the student and the family to create a Student Wellness Plan for returning to school.
 - ❖ Note: This should include the elements of the Crisis Evaluation Plan, including frequent check-ins, who the student can go to when in need, and what happens when the student starts moving toward ideation.
9. If any death occurs with someone connected to schools, Options will provide onsite support and counseling.

Suicide Postvention

1. GATHER APPROPRIATE DECISION MAKERS

School administrator/s should contact a District Office liaison, District Communications Specialist, their individual School Counselor/s or Behavior Intervention Specialist, and the Crisis Counseling Response Team (CCRT) liaison. This group of decision makers should:

- Determine the level of crisis (i.e. type of crisis, who was involved, how many students/staff will be affected, etc.).
- Determine the type of counseling, staff and administrative response required (i.e. can it be handled w/on-site staff or should CCRT resources be utilized). If CCRT support services are required, the CCRT liaison will contact and direct CCRT members. [Link to CCRT phone numbers.](#)
- Consider and discuss all the below issues

2. CHECK THE FACTS OF THE CRISIS

Confirm the facts of the crisis with appropriate public agencies. It is important that facts be confirmed to reduce rumors and/or untruths. It's important that the facts of the incident are known and understood and also what can be shared and what can't.

3. ADAPT THE PLAN TO FIT THE CRISIS

Review the following procedures to accommodate the current incident. Remember that each incident is unique and the team response will vary.

a. ANNOUNCE THE EVENT TO THE SCHOOL -

[Link to announcements about a death](#)

[Link to announcement about other crises](#)

- How will you tell the staff? Consider the subs in the building. Remember to think about staff who weren't there and didn't receive message.
- Who will tell staff?
- Who on staff needs to be told?
- Should students be told? If so, how?
 - Teachers in classroom/s (written announcement to assist, Administrator should develop and distribute any written announcement so that all staff is giving consistent and factual information.)
 - Teachers and CCRT in classroom/s
 - Specialist/s and/or administrator in classroom
 - Individual contact w/certain students
 - School wide gathering (time and place?)
 - School wide announcement
 - Other?
- Who else might be impacted? students at other schools, staff?

b. FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES - What's the most important thing for the day.

- Announce event in classroom. Discuss the crisis w/students
- Identify students in need of counseling
- Notify Counseling Center the number of student wanting counseling services
- Remove very distraught students from the class by having them escorted to the Counseling Center (or other designated location)
- Involve class in constructive activities relating to the event ([link to activities](#))
- Postpone testing
- Eliminate, shorten and structure assignments for a few days
- Discuss with and prepare students for service or funeral attendance

c. CCRT and/or COUNSELING CENTER RESPONSIBILITIES - develop a plan for who is doing what

- Inform feeder schools in the area so they can provide support for students affected in the schools
- Maintain a list of students counseled
- Call parents of students counseled who are very distressed so that continued support can be provided for those individuals
- Select and inform those students/staff who should participate in the Memorial Service (if the school is hosting one) in either an active or advisory capacity

d. ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- If the CCRT services are being utilized, inform the entire staff about the CCRT's role during the crisis. This will reduce much of the anxiety and instills in the faculty and counselors the confidence needed to handle the students.

- Assign extra secretarial help to the Counseling Center
 - Contact district personnel for support
 - Stop notifications on student activity (grade reports, attendance, etc) from being sent to the home of a family whose child has died
 - Remove personal items from desks and lockers to save for parents
 - Rearrange seating, classes, programs, etc. as indicated by crisis.
 - Changes to be made include follow up beyond the first few days after the incident
 - Establish areas and locations for counseling services
 - Keep staff updated
 - Identify faculty and staff in need of counseling
 - Emphasize facts and squelch rumors
 - Remain highly visible
 - Arrange for excused absences and transportation for students attending off-campus funeral services
 - Arrange for staff debriefing
 - Contact parents of student/s who have died. Determine if there are any needs they have or things that the school can provide
- e. **HANDLING THE MEDIA** : All media inquiries received at a building should be directed to [Kristin Hosfelt](#), District 7 Communications and Public Relations Specialist. The Communications Specialist will coordinate with the administrator to do one or more of the following items, depending on the crisis:
- **News release or general statement**
 - **Press conference or media availability**
 - **Written statement for people answering telephone calls**
- f. **SCHOOL MEMORIAL SERVICE** - consider if there is a need [\(link to planning guide\)](#)
- g. **Plan for Post-crisis debriefing with the Crisis Response Team.**
- How did we respond?
 - What went well?
 - What needs improvement?