

## **SUICIDE PREVENTION**

### **PURPOSE**

The LCSD Board of Trustees recognizes that district staff, and those in schools in particular, are well-situated to identify warning signs of suicide in students and make appropriate referrals for help. In those cases where individual students are at-risk or in-crisis, all staff shall cooperate in providing those supports needed to address the student's issue and to normalize, insofar as possible. Any possibility of suicide or suicidal thought or ideation requires vigilant attention from staff, students and their families and the community. This policy, in accordance with SB 204, shall provide a framework within the Lyon County School District for student suicide prevention.

### **POLICY**

1. District staff and volunteers shall report comments or knowledge of student expressions of suicidal thoughts to appropriate school personnel such as the school counselor or administration.
2. Although the components of the crisis management shall be contained within the district's confidential Emergency Operations Plan, the district's suicide prevention strategies include:
  - a. Prevention education activities
  - b. Intervention procedures and Risk Assessment
  - c. Training to all staff on warning signs and risk factors
  - d. Methods by which staff, students and their families can report concerns to appropriate district staff, law enforcement or outside resources
  - e. Methods for staff response to a crisis situation
  - f. Availability and distribution to parents/guardians of information related to community-based mental health resources
  - g. Follow-up support for the student.
3. District staff who have actual knowledge of a suicide threat or threat to others must report the information to the school counselor or administration where the suicide screening and protocol will be implemented by qualified staff to determine if a student is at risk for suicide.
4. The District shall implement a suicide screening and assessment process which includes, but is not limited to, the following steps:
  - a. A student is identified as at risk or possibly at risk for suicide;
  - b. Qualified staff (school counselor, social worker, nurse, or psychologist) shall complete the District's suicide screening with student; and
  - c. The parent/guardian shall be notified. Discussion with the parent/guardian may include safety planning such as reducing access to lethal means.
5. While District staff may recognize potentially suicidal youth and may make an initial risk assessment, the District cannot provide in-depth mental health counseling. Designated

District staff shall provide resources for further assessment and counseling for parents/guardians of students who exhibit suicidal behaviors. Such District staff may include, but are not limited to counselors, psychologists, and school administration.

6. District staff shall partner with and provide outreach to persons and organizations in the community that may be able to assist with the prevention of suicide or intervention with a student who is at risk of suicide. This may include, but is not limited to, state and local health organizations, private practitioners and religious and other nonprofit organizations.
7. The Superintendent is delegated the authority to implement the provisions of this policy and the associated state law. This includes the development and adoption of administrative regulations and procedures intended to assist in the prevention of suicide and provide intervention for a student who is at risk of suicide. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - a. Providing information and training to staff and students concerning the prevention of suicide. This may include, but is not limited to, instruction concerning the identification of:
    - i. Appropriate mental health services at the school and in the community including when and how to refer students and their families for such services; and
    - ii. Other persons and organizations in the community including, but not limited to, religious and other nonprofit organizations, that may be able to assist with the response to a suicide.
  - b. Review of appropriate materials concerning the prevention of suicide associated with bullying and cyber-bullying and appropriate methods to respond to such incidents.
  - c. Methods for recognizing, screening, referring, and responding to students in emotional or behavioral distress, including those who exhibit indicators of substance abuse, violence, or suicide.
  - d. Protocols and methods of providing follow-up support for impacted students (postvention).
  - e. Training of school resource officers in the prevention of suicide.
8. In creating this policy, the Board recognizes the risk of suicide or self-harm to all students regardless of age, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, religion, or disability. Certain students and groups of students have been deemed to be of particularly high risk of suicide. Those students and student groups include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Students affected by a suicide;
  - b. Students with disabilities, mental illness or substance use disorders;
  - c. Students who reside in settings other than a traditional home, including, but not limited to, foster care and homelessness;
  - d. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning students;
  - e. Children of veterans or service members; and
  - f. Any other group that scientific research indicates to be at a high risk of suicide.

9. District procedures regarding confidentiality shall be observed throughout any intervention.

#### Definitions

**Risk Assessment**-The process of gauging the likelihood for a student to attempt or die by suicide, engage in self-harm, or harm to others.

**Crisis Team**-A multidisciplinary team of administrative staff, mental health professionals, safety professionals, and support staff whose primary focus is to address crisis preparedness, intervention, response and recovery.

**Mental Health**-A state of mental, emotional, and cognitive health that can impact perceptions, choices and actions affecting wellness and functioning.

**Risk Factors for Suicide**-Characteristics or conditions that increase the chance that a person may attempt to take their life.

**Self-Harm**-Behavior that is self-directed and deliberately results in injury or the potential for injury to oneself. Self-harm behaviors can be either non-suicidal or suicidal.

**Suicide**-Death caused by self-directed injurious behavior with any intent to die as a result of the behavior. NOTE: The coroner's or medical examiner's office must first confirm that the death was a suicide before any school official may state this as the cause of death. Additionally, parent or guardian preference shall be considered in determining how the death is communicated to the larger community.

**Suicide Attempt**-A self-injurious behavior for which there is evidence that the person had at least some intent to die. A suicide attempt may result in death, injuries, or no injuries.

**Suicidal Behavior**-Suicide attempts, injury to oneself associated with at least some level of intent, developing a plan or strategy for suicide, gathering the means for a suicide plan, or any other overt action or thought indicating intent to end one's life.

**Suicidal Ideation**-Thinking about, considering, or planning for self-injurious behavior that may result in death. A desire to be dead without a plan or the intent to end one's life is still considered suicidal ideation and shall be taken seriously.

**Suicide Contagion**-The process by which suicidal behavior or a suicide completion influences an increase in the suicide risk of others. Identification, modeling, and guilt are each thought to play a role in contagion. Although rare, suicide contagion can result in a cluster of suicides within a community.

**Postvention**-Suicide postvention is a crisis intervention strategy designed to assist with the grief process following suicide loss. This strategy, when used appropriately, reduces the risk of suicide contagion, provides the support needed to help survivors cope with a

suicide death, addresses the social stigma associated with suicide, and disseminates factual information after the death of a member of the school community.

Adopted 12/15/2020