

The Governing Board recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among youth, prevention is a collective effort that requires stakeholder engagement, and school personnel who regularly interact with students are often in a position to recognize the warning signs of suicide and to offer appropriate referral and/or assistance. In an effort to reduce suicidal behavior, its impact on students and families, and other trauma associated with suicide, the Superintendent or designee shall develop measures, strategies, practices, and supports for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention.

In developing policy and procedures for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention, the Superintendent or designee shall consult with school and community stakeholders, school-employed mental health professionals, suicide prevention experts, and, in developing policy for grades **K-6**, the county mental health plan. (Education Code 215)

School and community stakeholders and school mental health professionals with whom the Superintendent or designee shall consult may include district and school administrators, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, school nurses, other staff, parents/guardians and caregivers, students, local health agencies, mental health professionals, community organizations, law enforcement, legal counsel, and/or the district's risk manager or insurance carrier. The Superintendent or designee may also collaborate with county and/or city governments in an effort to align district policy with any existing community suicide prevention plans.

Measures and strategies for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention shall include, but are not limited to:

1. Staff development on suicide awareness and prevention for teachers, interns, school counselors, and others who interact with students, including, as appropriate, substitute teachers, coaches, expanded day learning staff, crossing guards, tutors, and volunteers
2. Instruction to students in problem-solving, coping, and resiliency skills to promote students' mental, emotional, and social health and well-being, as well as instruction in recognizing and appropriately responding to warning signs of suicidal intent in others

3. Methods for promoting a positive school climate that enhances students' feelings of connectedness with the school and that is characterized by caring staff and harmonious interrelationships among students
4. The review of materials and resources used in awareness efforts and communications to ensure they align with best practices for safe and effective messaging about suicide
5. The provision of information to parents/guardians and caregivers regarding risk and protective factors, warning signs of suicide, the severity of the suicide problem among youth, the district's suicide prevention curriculum, the district's suicide prevention policy and procedures, basic steps for helping suicidal youth, the importance of communicating with appropriate staff if suicide risk is present or suspected, access to suicide prevention training, and/or school and community resources that can help youth in crisis
6. Encouragement for students to notify appropriate school personnel or other adults when they are experiencing thoughts of suicide or when they suspect or have knowledge of another student's suicidal intentions
7. Crisis intervention procedures for addressing suicide threats or attempts
8. Counseling and other postvention strategies for helping students, staff, and others cope in the aftermath of a student's suicide
9. Establishment of district and/or school-site crisis intervention team(s) to ensure the proper implementation and review of this policy and other district practices related to the emotional and behavioral wellness of students, including, but not limited to, the oversight of mental health and suicide prevention training, collaboration with community mental health organizations, identification of resources and organizations that provide evidence-based treatment, collaboration to build community response, and compliance with Education Code 215

As appropriate, these measures and strategies shall specifically address the needs of students who are at high risk of suicide, including, but not limited to, students who are bereaved by suicide; students with disabilities, mental illness, or substance use disorders; students who are experiencing homelessness or who are in out-of-home settings such as foster care; and students who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning. (Education Code 215)

The Board shall ensure that measures and strategies for students in grades **K-6** are age appropriate and delivered and discussed in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of young students. (Education Code 215)

If a referral is made for mental health or related services for a student in grade **K-6** who is a Medi-Cal beneficiary, the Superintendent or designee shall coordinate and consult with the county mental health plan. (Education Code 215)

District employees shall act only within the authorization and scope of their credential or license. Nothing in this policy shall be construed as authorizing or encouraging district employees to diagnose or treat mental illness unless they are specifically licensed and employed to do so. (Education Code 215)

The Board shall review, and update as necessary, the **TK-12** suicide prevention policy at least every five years. The Board may, at its discretion, review the **TK-12** suicide prevention policy more frequently. (Education Code 215)

The Superintendent or designee shall periodically review district data pertaining to school climate and reports of suicidal ideation, attempts, or death to identify patterns or trends and make recommendations regarding program development.

The Superintendent or designee shall post this policy on the district's web site, in a prominent location and in a manner that is easily accessible to parents/guardians and students. (Education Code 234.6)

### **Training and Education**

Training shall be provided to all staff that includes risk factors and warning signs of suicide, suicide prevention, intervention, referral, and postvention. All trainings shall be offered under school-employed mental health professionals who have received advanced training specific to suicide and may benefit from collaboration with one or more county and/or community mental health agencies.

The training provided will include core components of suicide prevention, such as:

- Suicide risk factors, warning signs, and protective factors;
- How to talk with a student about thoughts of suicide;
- How to respond appropriately to the youth who has suicidal thoughts;
- The referral of a student, on the same day, who is identified to be at risk of suicide for assessment while staying under constant monitoring by a staff member;

- Emphasis on reducing the stigma associated with mental illness and that early prevention and intervention can drastically reduce the risk of suicide;
- A review of the data annually to identify trends in the prevalence or occurrence of suicide ideation, attempts, or death;
- The impact of traumatic stress on emotional and mental health;
- Common misconceptions about suicide;
- School and community suicide prevention resources;
- Appropriate messaging about suicide;
- The procedures for responding to suicide risk and the aftermath of suicidal behavior; and
- Resources regarding youth suicide prevention.

Training resources include, but are not limited to, the following:

- [www.evolutionofpsychotherapy.com/](http://www.evolutionofpsychotherapy.com/)
- <https://comptonunified-keenansafeschools.com/>
- [www.crisisprevention.com/](http://www.crisisprevention.com/)
- [www.livingworks.net/asist](http://www.livingworks.net/asist)
- [www.cars-rp.org/](http://www.cars-rp.org/)
- <https://learn.nctsn.org/>

### **Suicide Prevention Explanation for TK-6th Grade**

Compton Unified School District (CUSD) wants to keep all students safe. We have people who can help if you are not feeling okay. We work together with the county mental health plan so students can get free help if they need it. We also have ways to get help on our website at <https://www.compton.k12.ca.us/>. We can help all students and those in a high-risk group.

To keep students healthy and prevent self-harm, CUSD uses second step curriculum:

- To be mindful of their self and their feelings;
- How to be kind to everyone;
- How to make good decisions;
- What to do if someone is being mean or a bully;
- How to ask for help;
- How to get help for others; and
- How to cope with stress and trauma.

If you need help or someone to talk to you can ask a school staff person for help. School staff can only help within the authorization and scope of their credential or license. Only those with the right training and license can diagnose or treat mental illness. Every staff person, however, must be kind and caring.

School staff are trained by experts to help:

- Look for students who are in crisis or display warning signs;
- Find the right mental health services at school and outside school; and
- Refer students and families to those services.

If school staff hear or see any warning signs, they will ask a counselor to help the student. Any student, who is in crisis, will not be left alone. The school counselor will decide the risk of harm and how best to help the student.

If students try to hurt themselves at school, staff will:

- Remain calm and let the principal know what is happening.
- Get emergency medical services for the student.
- Be caring and stay with the student until help arrives.
- Offer help to the student and their family; and
- Help the student come back to school when they are ready.

If students try to hurt themselves away from school, staff will:

- Let the principal know what is happening.
- Offer help to the student and their family; and
- Help the student come back to school when they are ready.

After a student has or knows someone who has had, a crisis, staff will:

- Share what happened with only those who need to know.
- Plan with the family to help the student.
- Help the student make up any missed work.
- Be caring and help the student in school.
- Follow up with the student and family often to see what help is needed.

If someone dies by suicide staff will:

- Send a team to the school to help anyone who is in need, and
- Offer help to any families who are in need.

If any student ever needs help, they can:

- Ask any staff person for help.
- Fill out a school request for help form.
- Ask for help on the District website warm line.
- Text the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) to 741-741 to be connected to a free, trained crisis counselor on the crisis text line.
- Call the Crisis Hotline at 1-800-991-5272
- Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255

Legal Reference:

**EDUCATION CODE**

215 Student Suicide Prevention Policies

32280-32289 Comprehensive Safety Plan

49060-49079 Student records

49602 Confidentiality of student information

49604 Suicide prevention training for school counselors

**GOVERNMENT CODE**

810-996.6 Government Claims Act

**PENAL CODE**

11164-11174.3 Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act

**WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE**

5698 Emotionally disturbed youth; legislative intent

5850-5883 Mental Health Services Act

**COURT DECISIONS**

Corales v. Bennett (Ontario-Montclair School District), (2009) 567 F.3d 554

Management Resources:

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS**

Health Education Content Standards for California Public Schools, Kindergarten through Grade Twelve,

2008

Health Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten through Grade Twelve, 2003

**Policy COMPTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Adopted: November 4, 2014 Compton, California

Revised: September 11, 2018 Compton, California

Revised and Adopted November 14, 2023

### **Staff Development**

Suicide prevention training shall be provided to teachers, interns, counselors, and others who interact with students, including, as appropriate, substitute teachers, coaches, expanded day learning staff, crossing guards, tutors, and volunteers. The training shall be offered under the direction of a district counselor, psychologist, and/or social worker who has received advanced training specific to suicide and who may collaborate with one or more county or community mental health agencies.

Materials for training shall include how to identify appropriate mental health services at the school site and within the community, and when and how to refer youth and their families to those services. Materials also may include programs that can be completed through self-review of suitable suicide prevention materials. (Education Code 215)

Additionally, staff development shall include research and information related to the following topics:

The higher risk of suicide among certain groups, including, but not limited to, students who are impacted by suicide; students with disabilities, mental illness, or substance use disorders; students who are experiencing homelessness or who are in out-of-home settings such as foster care; and students who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning

Individual risk factors such as previous suicide attempt(s) or self-harm, history of depression or mental illness, family history of suicide or violence, feelings of isolation, interpersonal conflicts, a recent severe or traumatic stressor or loss, family instability, impulsivity, and other factors

Identification of students who may be at risk of suicide, including, but not limited to, warning signs that may indicate depression, emotional distress, or suicidal intentions, such as changes in students' personality or behavior and verbalizations of hopelessness or suicidal intent

Protective factors that may help to decrease a student's suicide risk, such as resiliency, problem-solving ability, access to mental health care, and positive connections to family, peers, school, and community

Instructional strategies for teaching the suicide prevention curriculum, promoting mental and emotional health, reducing the stigma associated with mental illness, and using safe and effective messaging about suicide

The importance of early prevention and intervention in reducing the risk of suicide

School and community resources and services, including resources and services that meet the specific needs of high-risk groups

Appropriate ways to interact with a student who is demonstrating emotional distress or is suicidal and procedures for intervening when a student attempts, threatens, or discloses the desire to die by suicide, including, but not limited to, appropriate protocols for constant monitoring and supervision of the student, during the time the student is in the school's physical custody, while the immediate referral of the student to medical or mental health services is being processed

District procedures for responding after a suicide has occurred

Common misconceptions about suicide

The district may provide additional professional development in suicide risk assessment and crisis intervention to district mental health professionals, including, but not limited to, school counselors, psychologists, social workers, and nurses.

### ***Instruction***

The district's comprehensive health education program shall promote the healthy mental, emotional, and social development of students and shall be aligned with the state content standards and curriculum framework. Suicide prevention instruction shall be incorporated into the health education curriculum in an age and developmentally appropriate manner and shall be designed to help students:

Identify and analyze warning signs and risk factors associated with suicide, including, but not limited to, understanding how mental health challenges and emotional distress, such as feelings of depression, loss, isolation, inadequacy, and anxiety, can lead to thoughts of suicide

Develop coping and resiliency skills for dealing with stress and trauma, and building self-esteem



Learn to listen, be honest, share feelings, and get help when communicating with friends who show signs of suicidal intent

Identify trusted adults; school resources, including the district's suicide prevention, intervention, and referral procedures; and/or community crisis intervention resources where youth can get help

Develop help-seeking strategies and recognize that there is no stigma associated with seeking services for mental health, substance abuse, and/or suicide prevention

Recognize that early prevention and intervention can drastically reduce the risk of suicide

The Superintendent or designee may develop and implement school activities that raise awareness about mental health wellness and suicide prevention.

### **Student Identification Cards**

Student identification cards for students in **grades 7-12** shall include the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline telephone number and may also include the Crisis Text Line and/or a local suicide prevention hotline telephone number. (Education Code 215.5)

### ***Intervention***

The Superintendent or designee shall provide the name, title, and contact information of the members of the district and/or school crisis intervention team(s) to students, staff, parents/guardians, and caregivers and on school and district web sites. Such notifications shall identify the mental health professional who serves as the crisis intervention team's designated reporter to receive and act upon reports of a student's suicidal intention.

Students shall be encouraged to notify a teacher, principal, counselor, designated reporter, or other adult when they are experiencing thoughts of suicide or when they suspect or have knowledge of another student's suicidal intentions.

Every statement regarding suicidal intent shall be taken seriously. Whenever a staff member suspects or has knowledge of a student's suicidal intentions based on the student's verbalizations or act of self-harm, the staff member shall promptly notify the principal, school counselor, or designated reporter, who shall implement district intervention protocols as appropriate.

Although any personal information that a student discloses to a school counselor shall generally not be revealed, released, discussed, or referred to with third parties, the counselor may report to the principal or student's parents/guardians when there is reasonable cause to believe that disclosure is necessary to avert a clear and present danger to the health, safety, or welfare of the student or others within the school community. In addition, the counselor may disclose information of a personal nature to psychotherapists, other health care providers, or the school nurse for the sole purpose of referring the student for treatment, or to report child abuse and neglect as required by Penal Code 11164-11174.3. (Education Code 49602)

Whenever schools establish a peer counseling system to provide support for students, peer counselors shall receive training that includes identification of the warning signs of suicidal behavior and referral of a suicidal student to appropriate adults.

When a suicide attempt or threat is reported, the principal or designee shall ensure student safety by taking the following actions:

Immediately securing medical treatment and/or mental health services as necessary

Notifying law enforcement and/or other emergency assistance if a suicidal act is being actively threatened

Keeping the student under continuous adult supervision and providing comfort to the student until the parent/guardian and/or appropriate support agent or agency can be contacted and has the opportunity to intervene

Removing other students from the immediate area as soon as possible

The principal or designee shall document the incident in writing, including the steps that the school took in response to the suicide attempt or threat.

The Superintendent or designee shall follow up with the parent/guardian and student in a timely manner to provide referrals to appropriate services as needed. If the parent/guardian does not access treatment for the student, the Superintendent or designee may meet with the parent/guardian to identify barriers to treatment and assist the family in providing follow-up care for the student. If follow-up care is still not provided, the Superintendent or designee shall consider whether it is necessary, pursuant to laws for mandated reporters of child neglect, to refer the matter to the local child protective services agency.

For any student returning to school after a mental health crisis, the principal or designee and/or school counselor may meet with the parents/guardians and, if appropriate, with the student to discuss re-entry and appropriate steps to ensure the student's readiness for return to school and determine the need for ongoing support.

### *Postvention*

In the event that a student dies by suicide, the Superintendent or designee shall communicate with the student's parents/guardians to offer condolences, assistance, and resources. In accordance with the laws governing confidentiality of student record information, the Superintendent or designee shall consult with the parents/guardians regarding facts that may be divulged to other students, parents/guardians, and staff.

The Superintendent or designee shall implement procedures to address students' and staff's grief and to minimize the risk of imitative suicide or suicide contagion. The Superintendent or designee shall provide students, parents/guardians, and staff with information, counseling, and/or referrals to community agencies as needed. Students significantly affected by suicide death and those at risk of imitative behavior should be identified and closely monitored. School staff may receive assistance from school counselors or other mental health professionals in determining how to best discuss the suicide or attempted suicide with students.

Any response to media inquiries shall be handled by the district-designated spokesperson who shall not divulge confidential information. The district's response shall not sensationalize suicide and shall focus on the district's postvention plan and available resources.

After any suicide or attempted suicide by a student, the Superintendent or designee shall provide an opportunity for all staff who responded to the incident to debrief, evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies used, and make recommendations for future actions.

### Policy COMPTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Adopted:	November 4, 2014 Compton, California
Revised:	September 11, 2018 Compton, California
Revised and Adopted	November 14, 2023

Website [Suicide Prevention Messaging](#)  
Website [National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention](#)  
Website [Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission](#)  
Website [HEARD Alliance](#)  
Website [Each Mind Matters: California's Mental Health Movement](#)  
Website [Crisis Text Line](#)  
Website [CalSCHLS](#)  
Website [California Mental Health Services Authority](#)  
Website [National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)  
Website [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#)  
Website [Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#)  
Website [Suicide Prevention Resource Center](#)  
Website [Trevor Project](#)  
Website [American Academy of Pediatrics](#)  
Website [American Association of Suicidology](#)  
Website [American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#)  
Website [American Psychological Association](#)  
Website [California Department of Education, Mental Health](#)  
Website [California Department of Health Care Services, Mental Health Services](#)  
**Website** [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Mental Health](#)  
Website [National Association of School Psychologists](#)  
Website [National Institute for Mental Health](#)  
Website [American School Counselor Association](#)