

SUICIDE PREVENTION/SELF-DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIORS REGULATION

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide clear policies and procedures in the event of suicidal behavior being presented by any student in kindergarten through grade 12. These guidelines have been developed to address the roles of school and community service agency personnel in providing counseling and crisis-intervention services. The procedures are designed to ensure that the district has done its best as an educational institution to prevent suicide, to obtain appropriate services for youth at risk of suicide, and to assist the school and community to deal effectively with suicidal behaviors or suicide.

A. General Provisions

Confidentiality: In the case of threatening situations, students and staff members involved must understand that confidential information will only be released to parties designated by the Superintendent of Schools to assist individuals in suicide prevention. All reports on individual cases shall be kept in a confidential file by the building principal.

Staff members under no circumstances shall release information regarding an alleged student suicidal behavior, or actual suicides, to the media. The Superintendent or a designee is the sole person who shall communicate with the media with respect to such matters.

The building principal or a designee shall keep the Superintendent informed on an ongoing basis about procedures following suicidal behavior.

B. Definition of Terms

Suicide Ideation: Thoughts of killing oneself in however vague terms, i.e., "I don't want to go on any more," "They would be better off without me," "If he breaks up with me, I'll kill myself."

Suicide Gesture: Any self-destructive behavior that does not threaten a youth's immediate safety. Since gestures over time can escalate into attempts, it is vital that all such gestures be taken seriously.

Suicide Attempt: Any self-destructive behavior that threatens the youth's immediate safety.

Suicide Behavior: Includes suicide ideation, gesture, incident, or attempt.

Stabilization: Refers to the support necessary to ensure the immediate safety of the youth.

Emergency Services: Will include, but will not be limited to, those provided by the school medical staff, school psychologist, social worker, guidance counselor, and community resources such as local emergency rooms and crisis center.

C. Assessment Procedure

Any youth suspected by a member of the staff to be presenting a possible suicidal behavior will immediately be referred to the principal or a designee. Referrals may be made verbally or via a Suicide Incident Report.

The principal will immediately refer such youth to the Child Study Team. If intervention is deemed necessary, the parent/guardian shall be informed, and the Child Study Team Administrator shall initiate or continue a written Suicide Incident Report with a copy to the principal for a confidential file.

D. Intervention Services

After the Child Study Team completes the assessment, the following procedures will apply:

1. In the case of suicide ideation and gestures, but not attempt:

The Child Study Team will provide appropriate counseling services, utilizing community based referrals, as needed.

2. In case of a suicide attempt:

The Assessment Team shall address the immediate needs of the suicidal youth by mobilizing emergency services. These emergency services may include: emergency medical treatment, on-site crisis-intervention, and/or emergency psychiatric services.

If, in the opinion of the Child Study Team, the suicide attempt is related to abuse or neglect and the student is under eighteen years of age, the team will alert the principal, who shall act in accordance with 5460, Suspected Child Abuse and Maltreatment and refer to Child Protective Services.

It shall be the responsibility of the principal or designee to arrange for follow-up services such as reintegration of the youth at school and support services for the staff and student body.

Upon return to the school, the student shall be accompanied by a parent/guardian and shall report to the principal. The principal shall determine the appropriate educational program for the student. The Child Study Team may act as a consultant, providing expertise, assistance and guidance to address the long-term needs of the youth.