Policy 6.005 Suicide Prevention and Intervention

Cooperative Educational Services ("C.E.S.") recognizes that suicide is a complex issue and that schools are not mental health treatment centers. C.E.S. cannot be expected to thoroughly evaluate and eliminate suicidal risk. Nevertheless, school personnel may become aware of specific factual circumstances in which a student has communicated a suicidal intent or other specific circumstances in which a student is perceived by school staff to be at risk for suicide. In such cases, the Council is committed to respond in a supportive manner, both aggressively and immediately, to a student who has attempted, has threatened, or who communicates that they are considering attempting suicide.

Any Council employee who has knowledge that a student has made a suicidal threat or attempt or exhibited suicidal ideation must immediately report this information to the building principal, program administrator, or designee, the designated Crisis Intervention Team, and in his or her absence, the director of special education, Associate Executive Director or the Executive Director. The school principal, program administrator, or designee will contact the student's family and appropriate resources within and outside the school system, as permitted by law. The Council further directs the school staff to refer students who come to their attention as being at risk of attempting suicide for professional assessment and treatment services outside of the school. Information concerning a student's suicide attempt, threat or risk will be shared with others only as permitted by state and federal law.

In recognition of the need for youth suicide prevention procedures, the Council directs the Executive Director or designee to adopt and maintain administrative regulations addressing youth suicide prevention.

Training will be provided for teachers, other school staff, and students regarding the prevention of and response to youth suicide.

Legal Reference:
Connecticut General Statutes § 10-220a
Connecticut General Statutes § 10-221(f)
Public Act 23-167, "An Act Concerning Transparency in Education."

ADOPTED: June 19, 1990
REVISED: February 25, 1993
REVISED: June 1, 2000
REVISED: March 5, 2026

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS REGARDING
SUICIDE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

Cooperative Educational Services ("C.E.S.") recognizes that suicide is a complex issue and that schools are not mental health treatment centers. C.E.S. cannot be expected to thoroughly evaluate and eliminate suicidal risk. Nevertheless, school personnel may become aware of specific factual circumstances in which a student has communicated a suicidal intent or other specific circumstances in which a student is perceived by school staff to be at risk for suicide, and in such cases, C.E.S. is committed to respond in a supportive manner, both aggressively and immediately, to a student who has attempted, has threatened, or who communicates that they are considering attempting suicide. The following procedures shall be implemented toward this end.

Management of Suicidal Risk

I. Any staff member who becomes aware of a student who may be at risk of suicide must immediately notify the building principal, program administrator, or designee. This must be done even if the student has confided in the staff person and asked that the communication be kept confidential. The principal or program administrator will then notify the appropriate Crisis Intervention Team members, the director of special education or the Executive Director or designee.

II. The Designated Staff Member shall interview the student, consider available background information, and determine whether, in the Designated Staff Member's judgment, the student is "at-risk" or "in imminent danger."

III. If the student is assessed to be "at-risk":

A. The Designated Staff Member shall notify the student's parent/guardian and request a meeting with them as soon as possible, preferably that same day.

B. When the parent/guardian arrives at school, the Designated Staff Member shall meet with the parent/guardian to discuss:

1. the seriousness of the situation;

2. the need for an immediate suicide risk evaluation at a medical or mental health facility, or other appropriate evaluation(s);

3. the need for continued monitoring of the student at home if the student is released following the evaluation;

4. referral to appropriate professional services outside the school system; and

5. a request for the parent/guardian to sign a release of information form permitting communication between the school and the facility to which the student will be taken, the student's therapist (if any) and other appropriate individuals.

C. The Designated Staff Member shall document in writing the course of events, including what transpired at the meeting and the outcome.

D. The Designated Staff Member may notify other staff, if permitted by state and federal law, as necessary to promote the safety of the student and others.

E. The Designated Staff Member may refer the student to the school's Child Study Team, Mental Health Team, Crisis Intervention Team, Student Assistance Team, Planning and Placement Team or other staff as appropriate for further consultation and planning.

F. The Designated Staff Member or the team shall monitor the student's progress and shall consult as necessary with family, school staff, and outside professionals, if permitted by state and federal law.

IV. If the student is assessed to be "in imminent danger":

A. The Designated Staff Member shall ensure that the student is not left alone.

B. The Designated Staff Member shall notify the parent/guardian and request that the student be picked up at school and taken to a medical or mental health professional for thorough suicidal risk evaluation.

C. When the parent/guardian arrives at school, the Designated Staff Member shall meet with the parent/guardian to discuss:

1. the seriousness of the situation;

2. the need for an immediate suicide risk evaluation at a medical or mental health facility, or other appropriate evaluation(s);

3. the need for continued monitoring of the student at home if the student is released following the evaluation;

4. referral to appropriate professional services outside the school system; and

5. a request for the parent/guardian to sign a release of information form permitting communication between the school and the facility to which the student will be taken, the student's therapist (if any) and other appropriate individuals.

In addition, the Designated Staff Member:

a. shall document in writing the course of events, including what transpired at the meeting and the outcome;

b. shall inform the principal of the course of events and the outcome;

c. may notify other staff, as necessary to promote the safety of the student and others, if permitted by state and federal law; and

d. shall refer the student to the school's Child Study Team, Mental Health Team, Crisis Intervention Team, Student Assistance Team, Planning and Placement Team or other staff as appropriate for further consultation and planning.

D. In instances where the parent/guardian is unable to come to school after being notified that their child has been identified as "in imminent danger" and the student must be picked up from school and taken for a thorough suicidal risk evaluation, the Designated Staff Member shall notify the parent/guardian of C.E.S.'s intent to and arrange transport of the student to an appropriate evaluation/treatment site by means of emergency vehicle (*e.g.,* ambulance or police cruiser). The Designated Staff Member shall arrange for an emergency vehicle to transport the student to the hospital or an appropriate mental health facility; shall inform hospital/facility staff of known information pertaining to the situation; and shall plan follow-up in relation to hospital staff or mental health facility staff decisions as to how to proceed.

In addition, the Designated Staff Member:

1. shall provide, over the telephone, information to the parent/guardian as to available resources outside and within the school system and shall plan follow-up contacts;

2. may notify police if the student poses a threat to the safety of self or others, or as dictated by other circumstances;

3. shall document in writing the course of events and the outcome;

4. shall inform the principal of the course of events and the outcome;

5 may notify other staff, as necessary to promote the safety of the student and others; and

6. shall refer the student to the school's Child Study Team, Mental Health Team, Crisis Intervention Team, Student Assistance Team, Planning and Placement Team or other staff as appropriate for further consultation and planning.

E. If the parent/guardian does not agree with the school's determination that the student is in imminent danger or for any other reason refuses to take action, the Designated Staff Member shall meet with the building principal to develop an immediate plan focused on the safety of the student. The Designated Staff Member shall document in writing the course of events and the outcome.

F. When a student assessed to have been "in imminent danger" returns to the school, the Designated Staff Member or the appropriate school-based team (if such referral has been made) shall coordinate consultation with outside professionals, supportive services in school, and changes in the instructional program, when necessary and as permitted by state and federal law.

V. When addressing students who may be "at risk" or "in imminent danger" of suicide, the Designated Staff Member shall consider, in light of the particular circumstances, whether a report to the Department of Children and Families is necessary and/or appropriate in accordance with statutory mandated reporting obligations, Board policy, and/or applicable law.

Suicide Education/Prevention - Students and Staff

I. As part of the C.E.S.'s Health Education Curriculum and Developmental Guidance Curriculum, students will be educated regarding suicide risk factors and danger signals, and how they might appropriately respond if confronted with suicidal behavior, verbalizations, or thoughts.

II. Annually, in-service training for school staff will be held in each school building to discuss suicide risk factors, danger signals, and the procedures outlined in these regulations.

EMERGENCY LIFELINES
988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
211 CT Crisis Help

Legal Reference:
Connecticut General Statutes § 10-220a
Connecticut General Statutes § 10-221(f)

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