COAHOMA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT



Suicide Prevention Plan

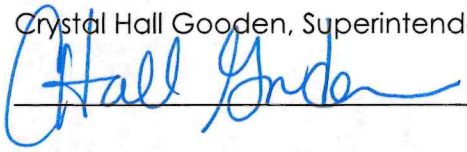
2026-2027

Coahoma County School District

Suicide Prevention Plan 2026-2027

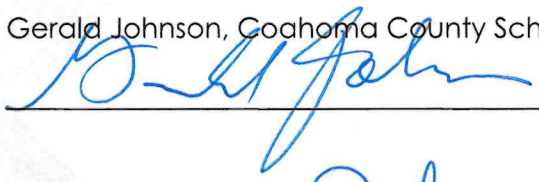
I hereby certify that our District School Board has reviewed and approved this plan for use by the district for the 2026-2027 school year.

Crystal Hall Gooden, Superintendent of Education

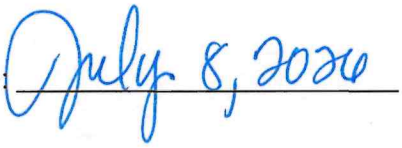


_____ (Signature)

Gerald Johnson, Coahoma County School District Board of Trustees President



_____ (Signature)

Board Approval Date: 

Coahoma County School District

Suicide Prevention Action Plan

The Board of Trustees of the Coahoma County School District recognizes that suicide is a major cause of death among youth and should be taken seriously. Therefore, protecting the health and well-being of all students is of utmost importance to the school district. The school board has adopted a suicide prevention policy which will help to protect all students through the following steps:

• Students will learn about recognizing and responding to warning signs of suicide in friends, using coping skills, support systems, and seeking help for themselves and friends. This curricular content will occur in all health classes throughout the school year, not just in response to a suicide, and the encouragement of help-seeking behavior will be promoted at all levels of the school leadership and stakeholders.

• CCSD has designated a suicide prevention coordinator, Crystal Gooden, and each school will designate a suicide prevention coordinator to serve as a point of contact for students in crisis and to refer students to appropriate resources. The district's crisis management team will provide guidance and support to schools as needed.

District Crisis Management Team

Crystal Hall Gooden, Superintendent & Chair
Latasha Turner, Curriculum Director
Glenn Williams, Maintenance Coordinator
Sakenna Dear, Exceptional Education Director
Nita Dumas, Director of Food Service
Stephen James, Chief Resource Officer
Treshawna Starks, School Nurse
Leandria Williams, School Nurse

• When a student is identified as being at-risk, a risk assessment will be completed by a trained school staff member who will work with the student and help connect the student to appropriate local resources.

• Students will have access to national resources that they can contact for additional support, such as the

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) suicidepreventionlifeline.org

LOCAL COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH CENTER:

Region 6/Life Help
1742 Cheryl Street | P.O. Box 1046
Clarksdale, MS 38614
662-627-7267
MOBILE CRISIS NUMBER: 1-888-404-8002/ 1-866-453-6216

ACTION PLAN

All school personnel and students will be expected to help create a school culture of respect and support, in which students feel comfortable seeking help for themselves or friends. Students are encouraged to tell any staff member if they or a friend are feeling suicidal or are in need of help.

While confidentiality and privacy are important, students should know that when there is risk of suicide, safety comes first.

Prevention

The Assistant Superintendent, Crystal Gooden, will serve as the suicide prevention coordinator for the district. The district suicide prevention coordinator and building principals will coordinate the implementation of this action plan. In addition, each school counselor or other principal designee, shall serve as the **school suicide prevention coordinator** to act as a point of contact in each school for issues relating to suicide prevention and policy implementation.

1. **Prevention Referral:** All staff members shall report students they believe to be at-risk for suicide to the school suicide prevention coordinator or appropriate school mental health professional if the coordinator is unavailable.

2. **Staff Professional Development:** All staff shall receive, at minimum, annual professional development on risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, response procedures, referrals, postvention, and resources regarding youth suicide prevention. The professional development shall include additional information regarding groups of students at elevated risk for suicide, including those living with mental and/or substance use disorders, those who engage in self-harm or have attempted suicide, those in out-of-home settings (e.g., youth in foster care, group homes, incarcerated youth), those experiencing homelessness, American Indian/Alaska Native students, LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning) students, students bereaved by suicide, and those with medical conditions or certain types of disabilities. Additional professional development in risk assessment and crisis intervention shall be provided to school-employed mental health professionals and school nurses. All new employees will receive this training within 90-days of employment by the school district.

Intervention

1. **Assessment and Referral:** When a student is identified by a peer, educator or other source as potentially suicidal — i.e., verbalizes thoughts about suicide, presents overt risk factors such as agitation or intoxication, an act of self-harm occurs, or expresses or otherwise shows signs of suicidal ideation — the student shall be seen by a school-employed mental health professional, such as a school psychologist, school counselor, school social worker, within the same school day to assess risk and facilitate referral if necessary. Educators shall also be aware of written threats and expressions about suicide and death in school assignments. Such incidences require immediate referral to the appropriate school-employed mental health professional. If there is no mental health professional available, a designated staff member (e.g., school nurse or administrator) shall address the situation according to district protocol until a mental health professional is brought in.

2. **Youth Suicide Prevention Programming** Developmentally appropriate, student-centered education materials shall be integrated into the curriculum of all K-12 health classes and other classes as appropriate. The content of these age-appropriate materials shall include the importance of safe and healthy choices and coping strategies focused on resiliency building, and how to recognize risk factors and warning signs of mental health conditions and suicide in oneself and others. The content shall also include help-seeking strategies for oneself or others and how to engage school resources and refer friends for help. In addition, schools shall provide supplemental small-group suicide prevention programming for

students. It is not recommended to deliver any programming related to suicide prevention to a large group in an auditorium setting.

3. **For At-Risk Youth**

    a. School staff shall continuously supervise the student to ensure their safety until the assessment process is complete

    b. The principal and school suicide prevention coordinator shall be made aware of the situation as soon as reasonably possible

    c. The principal shall contact the student's parent or guardian, as described in the Parental Notification Involvement section and in compliance with existing state law/ district policy (if applicable), and shall assist the family with urgent referral

    d. Urgent referral may include, but is not limited to, working with the parent or guardian to set up an outpatient mental health or primary care appointment and conveying the reason for referral to the healthcare provider; in some instances, particularly life-threatening situations, the school may be required to contact emergency services, or arrange for the student to be transported to the local Emergency Department, preferably by a parent or guardian

    e. If parental abuse or neglect is suspected or reported, the appropriate state protection officials (e.g., local Child Protection Services) shall be contacted in lieu of parents as per law

    f. Staff will ask the student's parent or guardian, and/or eligible student, for written permission to discuss the student's health with outside care providers, if appropriate,

When School Personnel Need to Engage Law Enforcement

1. When a student is actively suicidal and the immediate safety of the student or others is at-risk (such as when a weapon is in the possession of the student), school staff shall call 911 immediately.

2. The staff calling shall provide as much information about the situation as possible, including the name of the student, any weapons the student may have, and where the student is located. School staff may tell the dispatcher that the student is a suicidal emotionally disturbed person, or "suicidal EDP", to allow for the dispatcher to send officers with specific training in crisis de-escalation and mental illness.

Parental Notification and Involvement

1. The principal or designee shall inform the student's parent or guardian on the same school day, or as soon as possible, any time a student is identified as having any level of risk for suicide or if the student has made a suicide attempt (pursuant to school/state codes, unless notifying the parent will put the student at increased risk of harm).

2. If the principal, designee, or mental health professional believes, in their professional capacity, that contacting the parent or guardian would endanger the health or well-being of the student, they may delay such contact as appropriate. If contact is delayed, the reasons for the delay should be documented.

3. Staff will also seek parental permission to communicate with outside mental health care providers regarding their child.

4. Following parental notification and based on initial risk assessment, the principal or designee may offer recommendations for next steps based on perceived student need. These can include but are not limited to, an additional, external mental health evaluation conducted by a qualified health professional or emergency service provider.

In-School Suicide Attempts

In the case of an in-school suicide attempt, the health and safety of the student is paramount. In these situations:

1. First aide will be rendered until professional medical treatment and/or transportation can be received, following Coahoma County School District emergency medical procedures.

2. School staff will supervise the student to ensure their safety.

3. Staff will move all other students out of the immediate area as soon as possible.

4. If appropriate, staff will immediately request a mental health assessment for the youth.

5. The school principal, counselor or other designated personnel will contact the student's parent or guardian, as described in the Parental Notification and Involvement section.

6. Staff will immediately notify the principal regarding in-school suicide attempts.

7. The school will engage as necessary the crisis response team to assess whether additional steps should be taken to ensure student safety and well-being.

Out-of-School Attempts

If an employee of Coahoma County School District becomes aware of a suicide attempt by a student that is in progress in an out-of-school location, the staff member will:

1. Call the police and/or emergency medical services, such as 911.

2. Inform the student's parent or guardian if possible.

3. Inform the school principal and/or the district's suicide prevention coordinator (Crystal Gooden).

If the student contacts the staff member and expresses suicidal ideation, the staff member should maintain contact with the student (either in person, online, or on the phone). The staff member should then enlist the assistance of another person to contact the police while maintaining verbal engagement with the student.

RE-ENTRY PROCEDURE

For students returning to school after a mental health crisis (e.g., suicide attempt or psychiatric hospitalization), the principal or designee will meet with the student's parent or guardian, and if appropriate, meet with the student to discuss re-entry and appropriate next steps to ensure the student's readiness for return to school.

1. The school's counselor, principal or other designee will be identified to coordinate with the student, their parent or guardian, and any outside mental health care providers.

2. The parent or guardian will provide documentation from a mental health care provider of choice that the student has undergone examination and that they are no longer a danger to themselves or others.

3. The designated staff person will periodically check in with the student to help the student readjust to the school community and address any ongoing concerns.

Postvention

1. **Development & Implementation of Individual Action Plan:** The crisis response team will develop an action plan to guide school response following a death by suicide. A meeting of the crisis team to implement the action plan should take place immediately following news of the suicide death. The action plan may include the following steps:

a) Verify the death. District official will confirm the death and determine the cause of death through communication with a coroner's office, local hospital, the student's parent or guardian, or police department. Even when a case is perceived as being an obvious instance of suicide, it should not be labeled as such until after a cause of death ruling has been made. If the cause of death has been confirmed as suicide but the parent or guardian will not permit the cause of death to be disclosed, the school will not share the cause of death but will use the opportunity to provide voluntary grief counseling to students.

b) Assess the situation. The crisis team will meet to prepare the postvention response, to consider how severely the death is likely to affect other students, and to determine which students are most likely to be affected. The crisis team will also consider how recently other traumatic events have occurred within the school community and the time of year of the suicide. If the death occurred during a school vacation, the need for or scale of postvention activities may be reduced.

c) Share information. Before the death is officially classified as a suicide by the coroner's office, the death can and should be reported to staff, students, and parents/guardians with an acknowledgement that its cause is unknown. The superintendent or district's suicide prevention coordinator will write a statement for staff members to share with students and the public. The statement shall include the basic facts of the death and known funeral arrangements (without providing details of the suicide method), recognition of the sorrow the news will cause, and information about the resources available to help students cope with their grief. **Public address system announcements and school-wide assemblies should be avoided**.

d) Avoid suicide contagion. It should be explained in to staff that one purpose of trying to identify and give services to other high risk students is to prevent another death. The crisis team will work with teachers to identify students who are most likely to be significantly affected by the death. In a staff meeting, the crisis team will review suicide warning signs and procedures for reporting students who generate concern.

e) Initiate support services. Students identified as being more likely to be affected by the death will be assessed by the school counselor/prevention coordinator, or other assigned mental health professional to determine the level of support needed. The crisis team will coordinate support services for students and staff in need of individual and small group counseling as needed. In concert with parents or guardians, crisis team members will refer to community mental healthcare providers to ensure a smooth transition from the crisis intervention phase to meeting underlying or ongoing mental health needs.

f) Memorial plans. The school should not create on-campus physical memorials (e.g. photos, flowers), funeral services, or fly the flag at half-post because it may sensationalize the death and encourage suicide contagion. **School should not be canceled for the funeral**. Any school-based discussions or gatherings should focus on the prevention of future suicides while providing prevention resources.

- ***CCSD Schools should strive to treat all deaths in the same way.*** *Having one approach for memorializing a student who died of cancer or in a car accident and a different approach for a student who died by suicide reinforces stigma and may be deeply and unfairly painful to the student's family and friends. Refer to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's "After a Suicide" at www.afsp.org/schools for sample notification statements for students and parents/guardians, sample media statements, and other model language.*

Coahoma County School District Suicide Prevention

Student Preparedness & Curricula

Curricula Program Objectives

1. Increased knowledge of signs of depression and suicide.
2. Increased understanding of attitudes and behaviors that can hinder help seeking.
3. Increased understanding of steps to seek help for self and others.
4. Increased knowledge of "crisis contacts" at the school for immediate help.

Purpose:

These curricula will do the following:

- Provide information about suicide prevention
- Promote positive attitudes
- Increase students' ability to recognize if they or their peers are at risk for suicide
- Encourage students to seek help for themselves and their peers

Content:

Typical content includes:

- Basic information about depression and suicide
- Warning signs that indicate a student may be in imminent danger of suicide
- Underlying factors that place a student at higher risk of suicide
- Appropriate responses when someone is depressed or suicidal
- Help-seeking skills and resources

Participants:

These curricula are usually offered to all students in a class or a grade. Participation will require consent from parents for their child to participate. Parental consent is usually given on counseling permission forms. The children of parents who do not give consent are provided with an alternative activity. Parents will be given materials for home use with their children.

Format:

Lessons will be given in one to four class periods of 30–60 minutes each. They will be given as part of a class such as a health, family life, or a counseling/character education program, or life skills class, which addresses related topics (e.g., mental health issues, substance abuse, bullying, and other violence). This process enables the connections between the issues to be highlighted. The lessons may also be implemented during other classes, such as English and science.

Appendices and Attachments

Suicide Prevention Education In-Service Training
(CCSD POLICY - GADAC)

Suicide Prevention Education In-Service Training

The Board of Trustees of the Coahoma County School District recognizes that suicide is a major cause of death among youth and should be taken seriously. It is the policy of this school district that in-service training on suicide prevention education will be conducted for all newly employed school district employees.

The board establishes this policy in an effort to take positive steps toward reducing student suicide through:

1. **Prevention**. To provide in-service training to all newly employed school district employees with information about the recognition of the signs of suicidal behavior; including, but not limited to, early identification and delegation of responsibility for planning and coordination of suicide prevention efforts along with steps for reporting students who they believe to be at an elevated risk for suicide.
2. **Intervention**. To take affirmative action when an immediate referral is warranted, such as when a student verbalizes about suicide, presents overt risk factors such as aggression or intoxication, the act of self-harm occurs, or a student self-refers and to understand the emergency procedures when a referral is made and to provide support for students.
3. **Postvention**. To respond to suicide or suicide attempt, utilizing the district's crisis response, documentation, and reporting procedures.

As required by law, this policy shall be further developed in consultation with school and community stakeholders, school-employed mental health professions, and suicide prevention experts.

This school district shall utilize training materials and resources developed by the Mississippi Department of Mental Health and shall comply with all requirements of the Mississippi Department of Education regarding suicide prevention.

The superintendent or designee shall develop procedures for implementation of this policy.

Additional suicide prevention resources are available through the Mississippi Department of Education.

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline can be reached at 1-800-273-8255(TALK); http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/

LEGAL REF.: MS CODE ' 37-3-101 ' 37-3-103

Revised Date: 10/17/2023

BULLYING

(CCSD Policy-JDDA)

STUDENT BULLYING

The Coahoma County School District does not condone and will not tolerate bullying or harassing behavior. Bullying or harassing behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, or any act reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic that (a) places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property, or (b) creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits. A "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior. Bullying or harassing behavior will not be condoned or tolerated when it takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus, or when it takes place off school property when such conduct, in the determination of the school superintendent or principal, renders the offending person's presence in the classroom a disruption to the educational environment of the school or a detriment to the best interest and welfare of the pupils and teacher of such class as a whole.

The Coahoma County School District will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no student or school employee is subjected to bullying or harassing behavior by other school employees or students. Likewise, the District will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no person engages in any act of reprisal or retaliation against a victim, witness or a person with reliable information about an act of bullying or harassing behavior. The District encourages anyone who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or school employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior to report the incident to the appropriate school official.

The School Board directs the superintendent or designee to design and implement procedures for reporting, investigating, and addressing bullying and harassing behaviors. The procedures should be appropriately placed in District personnel policy handbooks, school handbooks that include discipline policies and procedures, and any other policy or procedure that deals with student or employee behavior. The discipline policies and procedures must recognize the fundamental right of every student to take "reasonable actions" as may be necessary to defend himself or herself from an attack by another student who has evidenced menacing or threatening behavior through bullying or harassing. Furthermore, the Coahoma County School District defines "reasonable action" as promptly reporting the behavior to a teacher, principal, counselor, or other school employee when subjected to bullying or harassing behavior.

Ref: SB 2015; Miss. Code Ann. § 37-7-301(e)

BULLYING POLICY PROCEDURES

(CCSD POLICY – JDDA-P)

PROCEDURES STUDENT BULLYING

STUDENT COMPLAINTS OF BULLYING OR HARASSING BEHAVIOR

Students and employees in the Coahoma County School District are protected from bullying or harassing behavior by other students or employees. It is the intent of the Board and the administration to maintain an environment free from bullying and harassing behavior. This complaint procedure provides a process for filing, processing and resolving complaints of such conduct. Adherence to these procedures is mandatory. The failure of any person to follow these procedures will constitute a waiver of the right to pursue a complaint at any level, including review by the Board.

I. Definitions

Bullying or harassing behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, or any act reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic that (a) places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property, or (b) creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits.

A "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

Bullying or harassing behavior will not be condoned or tolerated when it takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus, or when it takes place off school property when such conduct, in the determination of the school superintendent or principal, renders the offending person's presence in the classroom a disruption to the educational environment of the school or a detriment to the best interest and welfare of the pupils and teacher of such class as a whole.

II. Procedures for Processing a Complaint

Any student, school employee or volunteer who feels he/she has been a victim of bullying or harassing behavior, or has witnessed or who has reliable information that a student, school employee or volunteer has been subject to bullying or harassing behavior shall report such conduct to a teacher, principal, counselor or other school official. The report shall be made promptly but no later than five (5) calendar days after the alleged act or acts occurred. The school official shall complete a "Bullying/Harassing Behavior" complaint form which shall include the name of the reporting person, the specific nature and date of the misconduct, the names of the victim of the misconduct, the names of any witnesses and any other information that would assist in the investigation of the complaint. The report shall be given promptly to the principal or superintendent who shall institute an immediate investigation. Complaints against the principal shall be made to the superintendent and complaints against the superintendent shall be made to the Board chairman.

The complaint shall be investigated promptly. Parents will be notified of the nature of any complaint involving their student. The District official will arrange such meetings as may be necessary with all concerned parties within five (5) working days after initial receipt of the complaint by the District. The parties will have an opportunity to submit evidence and a list of witnesses. All findings related to the complaint will be reduced to writing. The District official conducting the investigation shall notify the victim and parents as appropriate when the investigation is completed and a decision regarding disciplinary action, as warranted, is determined.

If the victim is not satisfied with the decision of the District official, he/she may submit a written appeal to the superintendent. Such appeal shall be filed within ten (10) working days after receipt of the results of the initial decision. The superintendent will arrange such meetings with the victim and other affected parties as deemed necessary to discuss the appeal. The superintendent shall provide a written decision to the victim's appeal within ten (10) working days.

If the victim is not satisfied with the decision of the superintendent, a written appeal may be filed with the Board. Such appeal shall be filed within ten (10) working days after receipt of the decision of the superintendent. The Board shall, within twenty (20) working days, allow the victim and parents as appropriate to appear before the Board to present reasons for dissatisfaction with the decision of the superintendent. The Board shall provide a written decision within ten (10) working days following the victim's appearance before the Board.