

Suicide Prevention**Adopted: 02/16/2010 | Last Revised: 09/01/2026 | Last Reviewed: 09/01/2026**

The Board of Education recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among youth, that prevention is a collective effort that requires educational partners' engagement, and that 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 and its impact on students and families, and other associated trauma, the Superintendent or designee shall develop strategies, practices, and supports for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention.

In developing and updating district policy and procedures for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention, the Superintendent or designee shall consult with school and community partners, school-employed mental health professionals, and suicide prevention experts. If the policy will affect K-6 students, the county mental health plan will also be consulted.

School and community partners 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, school mental health therapists, 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.

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; help-seeking strategies and resources; and 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 supportive relationships 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 exceptional needs, 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, or otherwise marginalized.

In order to address mental health disabilities, the district may, as appropriate and in accordance with law, develop trauma-informed crisis management procedures that include an individualized assessment of the student's circumstances; provide and facilitate access to mental health evaluations and services; reasonably modify policies, such as attendance policies, for individual students; and train staff to recognize and respond appropriately to signs of distress and suicidal ideation in students.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish a process for school staff to maintain daily or regular contact with all students, including during distance learning and school closures, and for such staff to communicate any concerns about a student's emotional well-being and/or safety to the appropriate authorities.

Additionally, the Superintendent or designee shall ensure that school-based mental health professionals maintain regular contact with high-risk students, students who are on their caseloads, and those who are identified by staff as demonstrating need.

The Board shall ensure that suicide prevention 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.

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.

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.

When the district determines that a student is in need of mental or behavioral health services, the services shall be provided in accordance with protocols specified in Board policy.

The Board shall review, and update as necessary, this policy at least every five years. The Board may, at its discretion, review the policy more frequently.

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 website, in a prominent location and in a manner that is easily accessible to parents/guardians and students.

Policy Reference Disclaimer:

These references are not intended to be part of the policy itself, nor do they indicate the basis or authority for the Board to enact this policy. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.

Legal References:**STATE**EDUCATION CODE

215 Suicide prevention policies

215.5 Student identification cards; inclusion of safety hotlines

216 Suicide prevention online training programs

218.3 Training curriculum to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, and questioning students

234.6 Bullying and harassment prevention information

32280-32289.5 School safety plans

49060-49079 Student records

49428.15 Identification of evidence-based and evidence-informed training programs for schools to address youth behavioral health

49428.2 Referral protocols for addressing student behavioral health concerns in grades 7-12; certification of youth behavioral health training for employees

49428.5 Student mental health poster

49429 Telehealth technology in schools

49602 Counseling and 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 & INSTITUTIONS CODE

5698 Emotionally disturbed youth; legislative intent

5850-5886 Children's Mental Health Services Act

FEDERAL42 UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 42

290bb-33 Suicide Training and Awareness Nationally Delivered for Universal Prevention Act of 2021

MANAGEMENT RESOURCESCDE PUBLICATION

Model Youth Suicide Prevention Policy for Local Educational Agencies that Serve Kindergarten through Twelfth Grade Students, February 2023

Health Education Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve, May 2019

Health Education Content Standards for California Public Schools: Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve, 2008

CALSCHLS PUBLICATIONS

California School Staff Survey (CSSS)

California School Parent Survey (CSPS)

California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS)

CDC & PREVENTION PUBLICATION

School Connectedness: Strategies for Increasing Protective Factors Among Youth, 2009

COURT DECISION

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

EACH MIND MATTERS PUBLICATION

Making Headlines: Guide to Engaging the Media in Suicide Prevention in California, 2012

HEARD ALLIANCE PUBLICATION

K-12 Toolkit for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention, 2017

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES OVERSIGHT & ACCOUNTABILITY PUBLICATION

Striving for Zero: California's Strategic Plan for Suicide Prevention 2020-2025

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS PUBLICATION

Preventing Suicide: Guidelines for Administrators and Crisis Teams, 2015

Conducting a Virtual Suicide Assessment Checklist

Comprehensive School Suicide Prevention in a Time of Distance Learning, 2020

SUICIDE PREVENTION RESOURCE CENTER PUBLICATION

After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools, 2nd Edition, 2018

U.S. DEPT. OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES PUBLICATIONS

Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for High Schools, 2012

National Strategy for Suicide Prevention: Goals and Objectives for Action, rev. 2012

U.S. DOE OFC FOR CIVIL RIGHTS, USDOJ CIVIL RIGHTS PUBLICATION

Supporting and Protecting the Rights of Students at Risk of Self-Harm in the Era of COVID-19, October 2021

WEBSITES

California Department of Public Health, Office of Suicide Prevention

[https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DCDIC/SACB/Pages/Office-of-Suicide-Prevention-\(OSP\).aspx](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DCDIC/SACB/Pages/Office-of-Suicide-Prevention-(OSP).aspx)

Mental Health Evaluation, Training, Research, and Innovation Center for Schools (METRICS)

<https://www.metricscenter.org/>

CalHOPE Schools Initiative <https://www.calhopeschools.org/>

California Surgeon General, Safe Spaces: Trauma-Informed Training <https://osg.ca.gov/safespaces/>

Schoolsafety.gov <https://www.schoolsafety.gov/about>

CSBA District and County Office of Education Legal Services <https://legalservices.csba.org/#>

Suicide Prevention Messaging <https://suicidepreventionmessaging.org/#>

National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention <https://theactionalliance.org/#>

Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission <https://mhsoac.ca.gov/#>

HEARD Alliance <https://www.heardalliance.org/#>

Each Mind Matters: California's Mental Health Movement <https://emmresourcecenter.org/#>

Crisis Text Line <https://www.crisistextline.org/#>

CalSCHLS <https://calschls.org/#>

California Mental Health Services Authority <https://www.calmhsa.org/#>

Suicide Prevention Lifeline <http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/#>

Suicide Prevention Resource Center <http://www.sprc.org/about-suicide#>

National Child Traumatic Stress Network <http://www.nctsn.org/#>

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration <http://www.samhsa.gov/#>

Trevor Project <http://thetrevorproject.org/#>

American Academy of Pediatrics <http://www.aap.org/#>

American Association of Suicidology <http://www.suicidology.org/#>

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention <http://afsp.org/#>

American Psychological Association <http://www.apa.org/#>

California Department of Education, Mental Health <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/cg/mh#>

California Department of Health Care Services, Mental Health Services <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/MH#>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Mental Health <http://www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth#>

National Association of School Psychologists <http://www.nasponline.org/#>

National Institute for Mental Health <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/#>

American School Counselor Association <http://www.schoolcounselor.org/#>

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