BP-5141.52

SUICIDE PREVENTION

The School Board finds it important that the tragic situation of adolescent suicide be openly addressed and that staff, students and parents/guardians be made aware of warning signs and procedures by which they may help suicidal students at this especially vulnerable age.

The Board recognizes that all suicides must be taken seriously. The Superintendent or designee shall provide appropriate staff members with procedures for intervening in low-risk and in high-risk crisis situations. These procedures shall include guidelines by which staff members may assess the seriousness of a student's risk for suicide.

The Board believes that school staff, students and parents/guardians all can contribute significantly towards the prevention of adolescent suicide. The district shall make available suicide prevention training for each of the aforementioned segments.

Staff Awareness and Training

The Board strongly encourages teachers to help students of all ages develop both a positive self-image and a realistic attitude towards potential accomplishments.

In order that district staff may learn suicide prevention strategies, to recognize the warning signs of suicidal crisis, to understand how to help suicidal youths, and to identify helpful community resources, the Superintendent or designee shall arrange annual suicide awareness and prevention training as required by law. Additional certificated and classified staff may also be included. The district suicide prevention policy and procedures shall be thoroughly reviewed at this time. Staff shall be expected to learn to identify potentially suicidal students, to assess the degree of risk, to take preventive precautions and to report suicide threats to the appropriate authorities.

Curriculum

The Board finds it appropriate that suicide prevention instruction be incorporated into the curriculum. This instruction shall help students:

Understand how feelings of depression and despair can lead to suicide.

Identify alternatives to suicide and develop new coping skills.

Recognize the warning signs of suicidal intentions in their friends.

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

Identify community resources where teenagers can get crisis intervention help.

Legal References:
ALASKA STATUES
14.30.362 Suicide awareness and prevention training

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