# RANCHO SANTA FE SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Board Policy No. 5031: SUICIDE PREVENTION

A. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to establish guidelines for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention as required by Education Code section 215.

B. Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training

1. Suicide awareness and prevention training shall be provided to all teachers. The training shall be offered under the direction of a District counselor, psychologist, and/or social worker who has received advanced training specific to suicide and who may collaborate with one or more county or community mental health agencies.

2. The training shall include information concerning the District's prevention, intervention, and postvention strategies and procedures. The training shall further include suicide awareness and prevention in groups of pupils at elevated risk for suicide, including the following:

    a. Youth bereaved by suicide;
    b. Youth with disabilities, mental illness, or substance use disorders;
    c. Youth experiencing homelessness or in out-of-home settings, such as foster care; and
    d. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth.

3. Materials provided to training participants shall set forth how to identify appropriate mental health services, both at school and within the community, and when and how to refer pupils and their families to those services.

4. Materials approved for training may also include programs that can be completed through self-review of suitable suicide prevention materials.

5. Completion of training identified in this Board Policy does not authorize District employees to diagnose or treat a mental illness. District employees may only act within the authorization and scope of their respective credential or license.

C. Intervention Strategies and Guidelines

1. As appropriate, the District shall integrate developmentally appropriate, student-centered education training and materials into the curriculum of health classes. Any discussion of suicide with students shall be age appropriate and shall be delivered and discussed in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of young pupils given their age and maturity levels.

2. In the event a District employee suspects or has knowledge that a pupil is suicidal or has suicidal ideation, the District employee shall promptly report this to the principal or school psychologist. The principal or school psychologist shall then notify the pupil's parents/guardians as soon as possible and may refer the pupil to mental health resources in the school or community. If the situation is critical, the pupil may be referred to emergency services.

3. Pupils shall be encouraged to notify a teacher, principal, school psychologist, or other adult when they are experiencing thoughts of suicide or when they suspect or have knowledge of another pupil's suicidal intentions.

4. When a suicide attempt or threat is reported, the principal or designee shall:

    a. Ensure the pupil's physical safety by one of the following, as appropriate:

        i. Securing immediate medical treatment if a suicide attempt has occurred.

        ii. Securing law enforcement and/or other emergency assistance if a suicidal act is being actively threatened.

        iii. Keeping the pupil under continuous adult supervision until the parent/guardian and/or appropriate support agent or agency can be contacted and has the opportunity to intervene.

        iv. Removing other pupils from the immediate area as soon as possible.

    b. Designate specific individuals to be promptly contacted, including the school psychologist, superintendent, and/or the pupil's parent/guardian, and, as necessary, local law enforcement or mental health agencies.

    c. Follow up with the parent/guardian and pupil in a timely manner to provide referrals to appropriate services as needed.

5. If a referral is made for mental health or related services on behalf of a pupil who is a Medi-Cal beneficiary, the District shall ensure proper consultation and coordination with the San Diego County Mental Health Plan (MHP).

D. Postvention Strategies and Guidelines

1. Following a suicide, suicide attempt, or suicide-related trauma of a pupil, guidance counseling and mental health services shall be made available. Parents shall also be advised of guidance counseling and mental health services afforded by the school and community.

2. Following a suicide attempt of a pupil, the parents/guardians and appropriate personnel will meet to determine whether additional steps should be taken to ensure the pupil's continued safety on campus and discuss referrals to appropriate mental health services.

3. After any suicide or attempted suicide by a pupil, the Superintendent or designee shall provide an opportunity for all staff who responded to the incident to debrief, evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies used, and make recommendations for future actions.

E. Review of Board Policy

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

F. Student ID Cards

1. Effective January 1, 2019, all new student ID cards issued to 7th and 8th grade students shall have the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline printed on one side of the card.

2. Effective October 1, 2020, all new student ID cards issued to 7th and 8th grade students shall have the National Domestic Violence hotline printed on one side of the card.

Legal Reference:
Education Code sections 215, 215.5

Date Policy Adopted By The Board: July 6, 2017
Date Policy Reviewed By The Board: July 11, 2019
Dates Policy Revised By The Board: July 11, 2019; July 9, 2020; October 15, 2026