

CVUSD

Board Policy

BP 5141.52

Suicide Prevention

Students

~~The Governing Board recognizes that suicide is a major cause of death among youth and should be taken seriously. In order to attempt to reduce suicidal behavior and its impact on students and families, the Superintendent or designee shall develop preventive strategies and intervention procedures.~~

~~The Superintendent or designee may involve school health professionals, school counselors, administrators, other staff, parents/guardians, students, local health agencies and professionals, and community organizations in planning, implementing, and evaluating the district's strategies for suicide prevention and intervention.~~

The Governing Board recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among youth 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. To attempt to reduce suicidal behavior and its impact on students and families, the Superintendent or designee shall develop measures and strategies for suicide prevention, intervention, and “postvention” defined as: *“counseling and other social care given after the experience of a traumatic event, especially to those directly affected by a suicide.”*

In developing measures and strategies for use by the district, the Superintendent or designee may consult with school health professionals, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, administrators, other staff, parents/guardians, students, local health agencies, mental health professionals, and community organizations.

(cf. 1020 - Youth Services)

(cf. 1220 - Citizen Advisory Committees)

(cf. 1400 - Relations Between Other Governmental Agencies and the Schools)

Such measures and strategies shall include, but are not limited to:

- 1. Staff development on suicide awareness and prevention for teachers, school counselors, administrators including principals, and other district employees who interact with students in all grades**
- 2. Instruction to students in problem-solving and coping skills to promote students' mental, emotional, and social health and well-being, as well as 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 harmonious**

interrelationships among students

- 4. The provision of information to parents/guardians regarding risk factors and warning signs of suicide, the severity of the youth suicide problem, the district's suicide prevention curriculum, basic steps for helping suicidal youth, and/or school and community resources that can help youth in crisis**
- 5. 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**
- 6. Crisis intervention procedures for addressing suicide threats or attempts**
- 7. Counseling and other postvention strategies for helping students, staff, and others cope in the aftermath of a student's suicide**

Prevention and Instruction

Suicide prevention strategies may include, but not be limited to, efforts to promote a positive school climate that enhances students' feelings of connectedness with the school and is characterized by caring staff and harmonious interrelationships among students.

The district's health education program shall promote the healthy mental, emotional, and social development of students including, but not limited to, the development of problem-solving skills, coping skills, and self-esteem. Suicide prevention instruction shall be incorporated into the health education curriculum in the secondary grades. Such instruction shall be aligned with state content standards and shall be designed to help students analyze signs of depression and self-destructive behaviors, including potential suicide, and to identify suicide prevention strategies.

The Superintendent or designee may offer parents/guardians education or information which describes the severity of the youth suicide problem, the district's suicide prevention curriculum, risk factors and warning signs of suicide, basic steps for helping suicidal youth, and/or school and community resources that can help youth in crisis.

Staff Development

1. Research identifying risk factors, such as previous suicide attempt(s), history of depression or mental illness, substance abuse problems, family history of suicide or violence, feelings of isolation, interpersonal conflicts, a recent severe stressor or loss, family instability, and other factors
2. Warning signs that may indicate suicidal intentions, including changes in students' appearance, personality, or behavior
3. Research-based instructional strategies for teaching the suicide prevention curriculum and promoting mental and emotional health

4. School and community resources and services
5. District procedures for intervening when a student attempts, threatens, or discloses the desire to commit suicide

Intervention

Whenever a staff member suspects or has knowledge of a student's suicidal intentions, he/she shall promptly notify the principal or school counselor. The principal or counselor shall then notify the student's parents/guardians as soon as possible and may refer the student to mental health resources in the school or community.

Students shall be encouraged to notify a teacher, principal, counselor, or other adult when they are experiencing thoughts of suicide or when they suspect or have knowledge of another student's suicidal intentions.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish crisis intervention procedures to ensure student safety and appropriate communications in the event that a suicide occurs or an attempt is made on campus or at a school-sponsored activity.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

215 Student suicide prevention policies

32280-32289 Comprehensive safety plan

49060-49079 Student records

49602 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 AND INSTITUTIONS CODE

5698 Emotionally disturbed youth; legislative intent

5850-5883 Mental Health Services Act

COURT DECISIONS

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

Management Resources:

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS

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

~~Youth Suicide Prevention Guidelines for California Schools, 2005~~

Health Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve, 2003

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH PUBLICATIONS
California Strategic Plan for Suicide Prevention: Every Californian is Part of the Solution, 2008
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION PUBLICATIONS
Preventing Suicide, Guidelines for Administrators and Crisis Teams, 2015
School Connectedness: Strategies for Increasing Protective Factors Among Youth, 2009
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES PUBLICATIONS
~~National Strategy for Suicide Prevention: Goals and Objectives for Action, 2001~~
Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for High Schools, 2012
National Strategy for Suicide Prevention: Goals and Objectives for Action, rev. 2012
WEB SITES
American Association of Suicidology: <http://www.suicidology.org>
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention: <http://afsp.org>
American Psychological Association: <http://www.apa.org>
American School Counselor Association: <http://www.schoolcounselor.org>
California Department of Education, Mental Health: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/cg/mh>
~~California Department of Mental Health, Children and Youth Programs:~~
~~http://www.dmh.ca.gov/Services_and_Programs/Children_and_Youth~~
California Department of Health Care Services, Suicide Prevention Program:
<http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/MH/Pages/SuicidePrevention.aspx>
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Mental Health: <http://www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth>
National Institute for Mental Health: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov>
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services
Administration: <http://www.samhsa.gov>