

## Students

### **SUICIDE PREVENTION**

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/designee shall develop preventive strategies and intervention procedures.

The Superintendent/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.

*(cf. 1220 - Citizen Advisory Committees)*

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

### 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.

*(cf. 5131 - Conduct)*

*(cf. 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination (EEO, Title IX))*

*(cf. 5145.7 - Student Harassment)*

The District's comprehensive 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.

In addition, the Superintendent/designee may offer parents/guardians education or information which describes the severity of the youth suicide problem, 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

Annual training for teachers and nurses shall be provided at a staff meeting by a site administrator or District psychologist on the warning signs of youth suicide and the District response protocol. Further training can be sought from the Pupil

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### **SUICIDE PREVENTION** (continued)

Services Department for interested staff. Such training shall be designed to help staff identify and respond to students at risk of suicide. The training shall be offered in cooperation with one or more community mental health agencies and may include information on:

1. Research identifying risk factors, such as previous suicide attempt(s), history of depression or mental illness, substance use problems, family history of suicide or violence, feelings of isolation, interpersonal conflicts, a recent severe stressor or loss, family instability, and other factors.

*(cf. 5131.6 - Alcohol and Other Drugs)*

2. Warning signs that may indicate suicidal intentions, including changes in students' appearance, personality, or behavior.
3. Research-based instructional strategies for promoting mental and emotional health.
4. School and community resources and services.

*(cf. 5141.6 - School Health Services)*

5. District procedures for intervening when a student attempts, threatens, or discloses the desire to commit suicide.

*(cf. 4131 - Professional Development)*

## Intervention

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

*(cf. 5141 - Health Care and Emergencies)*

Staff members shall encourage students to notify a teacher, principal, psychologist, or other adult when they are experiencing thoughts of suicide or when they suspect or have knowledge of another student's suicidal intentions.

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**SUICIDE PREVENTION** (continued)

*(cf. 5138 - Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation)*

The Superintendent/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

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

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

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

WEB SITES

American Psychological Association: [www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org)

California Department of Education, Mental Health: [www.cde.ca.gov/ls/cg/mh](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/cg/mh)

California Department of Mental Health, Children and Youth Programs:  
[www.dmh.ca.gov/Services\\_and\\_Programs/Children\\_and\\_Youth](http://www.dmh.ca.gov/Services_and_Programs/Children_and_Youth)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Mental Health: [www.cdc.gov/mental health](http://www.cdc.gov/mental health)

National Institute for Mental Health: [www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)

Policy

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CHULA VISTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Chula Vista, California