

Paso Robles Joint USD

Board Policy

Suicide Prevention

BP 5141.52

Students

The Governing Board recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among youth and that an even greater amount of youth consider (17 percent of high school students) school personnel who regularly interact with students are often in a position to recognize the warning signs of suicide and attempt suicide (over 8 percent of high school students) (Centers for Disease Control to offer appropriate referral and Prevention, 2015).

~~Recognizing that it is the duty of the district and schools to protect the health, safety, and welfare of its students, this policy aims to safeguard students and staff against suicide attempts, deaths and other trauma associated with suicide, including ensuring adequate supports for students, staff, and families affected by suicide attempts and loss. As it is known that the emotional wellness of students greatly impacts school attendance and educational success, this policy shall be paired with other policies that support the emotional and behavioral wellness of students.~~

/or assistance. In an ~~attempt~~ effort to reduce suicidal behavior and its impact on students and families, the Superintendent or ~~Designee~~ designee shall develop measures and strategies for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention, ~~and the identification of the mental health challenges frequently associated with suicidal thinking and behavior. These strategies shall include professional development for all school personnel in all job categories who regularly interact with students or are in a position to recognize the risk factors and warning signs of suicide.~~

~~The~~ In developing policy and strategies for suicide prevention and intervention, the Superintendent or ~~Designee shall develop and implement preventive strategies and intervention procedures that include the following:~~

Overall Strategic Plan for Suicide Prevention

~~The Superintendent or Designee may involve~~ designee shall consult with school and community stakeholders such as administrators, other staff, parents/guardians, and students; school-employed mental health professionals (e.g., such as school counselors, school psychologists, nurses), administrators, other school staff members, parents/guardians/caregivers, students, school social workers, and school nurses; suicide prevention experts such as local health agencies and, mental health professionals, law enforcement, and community organizations in planning, implementing, and evaluating the district's strategies for suicide prevention and intervention.; law enforcement; and, in developing policy for grades K-6, the county mental health plan. (Education Code 215)

~~(cf. 1020 - Youth Services)~~

(cf. 1220 - Citizen Advisory Committees)

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

~~To ensure the policies regarding suicide prevention are properly adopted, implemented, and updated, the district shall appoint an individual (or team) to serve as the suicide prevention point of contact for the district. In addition, each school shall identify at least one staff member to serve as the liaison to the district's suicide prevention point of contact, and coordinate and implement suicide prevention activities on their specific campus.~~

Prevention

~~1. ——— Messaging about Suicide Prevention~~

~~Messaging about suicide has an effect on suicidal thinking and behaviors. Consequently, Paso Robles Joint Unified School District has critically reviewed and will continue to review all materials and resources used in awareness efforts to ensure they align with best practices for safe messaging about suicide.~~

The Board shall ensure that 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. (Education Code 215)

Measures and strategies for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention shall include, but are not limited to:

1. Staff development on suicide awareness and prevention for teachers, school counselors, and other district employees who interact with students, as described in the accompanying administrative regulation

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)

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

(cf. 6142.8 - Comprehensive Health Education)

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

(cf. 5131 - Conduct)

(cf. 5131.2 - Bullying)

(cf. 5137 - Positive School Climate)

(cf. 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment)
(cf. 5145.7 - Sexual Harassment)
(cf. 5145.9 - Hate-Motivated Behavior)

4. The provision of information to parents/guardians regarding risk factors and warning signs of suicide, the severity of the suicide problem among youth, 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

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 disabilities, 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. (Education Code 215)

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. (Education Code 215)

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

~~2. Suicide Prevention Training and Education~~

~~Paso Robles Joint Unified School District along with its partners has carefully reviewed available staff training to ensure it promotes the mental health model of suicide prevention.~~

(cf. 5141.6 - School Health Services)
~~(cf. 6164.2 - Guidance/Counseling Services)~~
~~(cf. 5141 - Health Care and Emergencies)~~

~~Training:~~

~~* At least annually, all staff shall receive training on the risk factors and warning signs of suicide, suicide prevention, intervention, referral, and postvention.~~

~~* All suicide prevention trainings shall be offered under the direction of school-employed mental health professionals (e.g., school counselors, psychologists) who have received advanced training specific to suicide. Staff training can be adjusted year-to-year based on previous~~

~~professional development activities and emerging best practices.~~

~~* Core components of the general suicide prevention training shall include:~~

~~— Suicide risk factors, warning signs, and protective factors;~~

~~— How to talk with a student about thoughts of suicide;~~

~~— How to respond appropriately to the youth who has suicidal thoughts.~~

~~— Emphasis on immediately referring any student who is identified to be at risk of suicide for assessment while staying under constant monitoring by staff member;~~

~~— Emphasis on reducing stigma associated with mental illness and that early prevention and intervention can drastically reduce the risk of suicide;~~

~~— Reviewing the data annually to look for any patterns or trends of the prevalence or occurrence of suicide ideation, attempts, or death.~~

~~— The impact of traumatic stress on emotional and mental health;~~

~~— School and community suicide prevention resources;~~

~~— Procedures for responding to the aftermath of suicidal behavior (suicidal behavior postvention);~~

~~— Responding after a suicide occurs (suicide postvention);~~

~~* The professional development also shall include additional information regarding groups of students judged by the school, and available research, to be at elevated risk for suicide.~~

~~These groups include, but are not limited to, the following:~~

~~— Youth affected by suicide;~~

~~— Youth with a history of suicide ideation or attempts;~~

~~— Youth with disabilities, mental illness, or substance abuse disorders;~~

~~— Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth;~~

~~— Youth experiencing homelessness or in out-of-home settings, such as foster care;~~

~~— Youth who have suffered traumatic experiences;~~

~~(cf. 4131—Staff Development)~~

~~(cf. 4231—Staff Development)~~

~~(cf. 4331—Staff Development)~~

~~3.——Employee Qualifications and Scope of Services~~

~~Employees of the Paso Robles Joint Unified School~~

~~District and their partners must~~employees shall act only within the authorization and scope of their credential or license.

Nothing in this

~~4.——Specialized Staff Training (Assessment)~~

~~Additional professional development in suicide risk assessment and crisis intervention shall be provided to mental health professionals (school counselors, psychologists, and nurses) employed by Paso Robles Joint Unified School District.~~

~~5.——Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers Participation and Education~~

~~To the extent possible, parents/guardians/caregivers should be included in suicide prevention efforts. At a minimum, schools shall make available to parents/guardians/caregivers the District's suicide prevention policy and procedures.~~

~~6.——Student Participation and Education~~

~~Paso Robles Joint Unified School District has carefully reviewed available student curricula to ensure it promotes the mental health model of suicide prevention and does not encourage the use of the stress model to explain suicide.~~

~~Under the supervision of school-employed mental health professionals, the content of the education for students shall include:~~

~~——Coping strategies for dealing with stress and trauma;~~

~~——How to recognize behaviors (warning signs) and life issues (risk factors) associated with suicide and mental health issues in oneself and others;~~

~~——Help seeking strategies for oneself and others, including how to engage school-based and community resources and refer peers for help;~~

~~——Emphasis on reducing the stigma associated with~~be construed as authorizing or encouraging district employees to diagnose or treat mental illness~~and the fact that early prevention and intervention can drastically reduce the risk of suicide.~~

~~Student-focused suicide prevention education can be incorporated into classroom curricula.~~

~~PRJUSD will support the creation and implementation of programs and/or activities on campus that raise awareness about mental wellness and suicide prevention.~~

~~Intervention, Assessment, Referral~~

~~1. — Staff~~

~~Staff members who have received advanced training in suicide intervention shall be designated as the primary supports on school campuses. Whenever a staff member suspects or has knowledge of a student's suicidal intentions, unless they shall promptly notify the primary supports, are specifically licensed and employed to do so. (Education Code 215)~~

~~— If the student is in imminent danger (has access to a gun, is on a rooftop, or in other unsafe conditions), a call shall be made to 911.~~

~~The Board shall review, and update as necessary, this policy at least every five years. (Education Code 215)~~

~~The Superintendent or Designee shall establish crisis intervention procedures to ensure student safety and appropriate communications if a suicide occurs or an attempt is made.~~

~~2. — Parents, Guardians, post this policy on the district's web site, in a prominent location and Caregivers~~

~~A referral process shall be made available to all in a manner that is easily accessible to parents/guardians/caregivers, so they know how to respond to a crisis and are knowledgeable about the school and community-based resources.~~

~~3. — Students~~

~~Students shall be encouraged to notify a staff member when they are experiencing emotional distress or suicidal ideation, or when they suspect or have knowledge of another student's emotional distress, suicidal ideation, or attempt.~~

~~4. — Parental Notification and Involvement~~

~~Each school within PRJUSD shall identify a process to ensure continuing care for the student identified to be at risk of suicide.~~

~~5. — Action Plan for In-School Suicide Attempts~~

~~If a suicide attempt is made during the school day on campus, it is important to remember that the health and safety of the student and those around him/her is critical. The following steps should be implemented:~~

~~* — Remain calm, remember the student is overwhelmed, confused, and emotionally distressed;~~

- ~~* Move all other students out of the immediate area;~~
- ~~* Immediately contact the administrator;~~
- ~~* Call 911 and give them as much information about any suicide note, medications taken, and access to weapons, if applicable;~~
- ~~* If needed, provide medical first aid until a medical professional is available;~~
- ~~* Parents/guardians/caregivers should be contacted as soon as possible;~~
- ~~* Do not send the student away or leave them alone, even if they need to go to the restroom;~~
- ~~* Review options and resources of people who can help;~~
- ~~* Promise privacy and help, and be respectful, but do not promise confidentiality;~~
- ~~* Student should only be released to parents/guardians/caregivers or to a person who is qualified and trained to provide help after a mental health evaluation has been completed.~~

. (Education Code 234.6. Action Plan for Out of School Suicide Attempts)

~~If a suicide attempt by a student is outside of PRJUSD property, it is crucial that once the LEA is informed, they protect the privacy of the student and maintain a confidential record of the actions taken to intervene, support, and protect the student. The following steps should be implemented:~~

- ~~* Contact the parents/guardians/caregivers and offer support to the family;~~
- ~~* Collaborate with the family how they would like the school to respond to the attempt while minimizing widespread rumors among teachers, staff, and students;~~
- ~~* Obtain permission from the parents/guardians/caregivers to share information to ensure the facts regarding the crisis is correct;~~
- ~~* Designate a staff member to handle media requests;~~
- ~~* Provide care and determine appropriate support to affected students;~~
- ~~* Offer to the student and parents/guardians/caregivers steps for re-integration to school.~~

~~7. Re-Entry to School After a Suicide Attempt~~

~~A student who threatened or attempted suicide is at a higher risk for suicide in the months following the crisis. Having a streamlined and well-planned re-entry process ensures the safety~~

~~and wellbeing of students who have previously attempted suicide and reduces the risk of another attempt. An appropriate re-entry process is an important component of suicide prevention. Involving students in planning for their return to school provides them with a sense of control, personal responsibility, and empowerment. The following steps should be implemented:~~

~~* Obtain a written release of information signed by parents/guardians/caregivers and providers~~

~~* Collaborate with student and parents/guardians/caregivers about any specific requests on how to handle the situation;~~

~~* Inform the student's teachers about possible days of absences;~~

~~* Allow accommodations for student to make up work (be understanding that missed assignments may add stress to student);~~

~~* Mental health professionals or trusted staff members should maintain ongoing contact to monitor student's actions and mood;~~

~~* Work with parents/guardians/caregivers to involve the student in an aftercare plan.~~

~~8. Responding After a Suicide Death (Postvention)~~

~~A death by suicide in the school community (whether by a student or staff member) can have devastating consequences on students and staff. Therefore, it is vital that we are prepared ahead of time in the event of such a tragedy. PRJUSD shall ensure that each school site adopts an action plan for responding to a suicide death as part of the general Crisis Response Plan. The Suicide Postvention Response Plan needs to incorporate both immediate and long-term steps and objectives.~~

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

215 Student suicide prevention policies

215.5 Suicide prevention hotline contact information on student identification cards

216 Suicide prevention online training programs

234.6 Posting suicide prevention policy on web site

32280-32289.5 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~~5886 Children's 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~~2019

~~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

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS PUBLICATIONS

Preventing Suicide: Guidelines for Administrators and Crisis Teams, 2015

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES PUBLICATIONS

National Strategy for Suicide Prevention: Goals and Objectives for Action, ~~2004~~rev. 2012

Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for High Schools, 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 Health Care Services, Mental Health, ~~Children and Youth Programs~~ Services:

http://www.dmhdhcs.ca.gov/Services_and_Programs/Children_and_Youthservices/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>

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

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

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

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: <http://www.samhsa.gov>

~~Policy PASO ROBLES JOINT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT~~

~~adopted: June 27, 2017 Paso Robles, California~~