SUICIDE PREVENTION

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.

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, and other district employees who interact with students in the secondary grades

(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)

SUICIDE PREVENTION (continued)

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

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 youth. (Education Code 215)

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
Health Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve, 2003
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
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 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 Association of School Psychologists: http://www.nasponline.org
National Institute for Mental Health: http://www.nimh.nih.gov
Trevor Project: http://thetrevorproject.org
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: http://www.samhsa.gov