

## Students

AR 5141.52

### SUICIDE PREVENTION

#### Intervention

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

Every statement regarding suicidal intent shall be taken seriously. Whenever a staff member suspects or has knowledge of a student's suicidal intentions based on the student's verbalizations or act of self-harm, ~~he/she~~**the staff member** shall promptly notify the principal or school ~~psychologist~~**counselor, who shall implement district intervention protocols as appropriate.**

Although any personal information that a student discloses to a school ~~psychologist~~**counselor** shall generally not be revealed, released, referenced, or discussed with third parties, the ~~psychologist~~**counselor** may report to the principal or student's parents/guardians when ~~he/she~~**there is** reasonable cause to believe that disclosure is necessary to avert a clear and present danger to the health, safety, or welfare of the student: **or others within the school community.** In addition, the ~~psychologist~~**counselor** may disclose information of a personal nature to psychotherapists, other health care providers, or the school nurse for the sole purpose of referring the student for treatment. (Education Code 49602)

~~A school employee~~**School employees** shall act only within the authorization and scope of ~~his/her~~**their** credential or license. An employee is not authorized to diagnose or treat mental illness unless ~~he/she is~~ specifically licensed and employed to do so. (Education Code 215)

Whenever schools establish a peer counseling system to provide support for students, peer ~~psychologists~~**counselors** shall receive training that includes identification of the warning signs of suicidal behavior and referral of a suicidal student to appropriate adults.

When a suicide attempt or threat is reported, the principal or designee shall ensure student safety by taking the following actions:

1. Immediately securing medical treatment and/or mental health services as necessary
2. Notifying law enforcement and/or other emergency assistance if a suicidal act is being actively threatened
3. Keeping the student under continuous adult supervision until the parent/guardian and/or appropriate support agent or agency can be contacted and has the opportunity to intervene

4. Removing other students from the immediate area as soon as possible

The principal or designee shall document the incident in writing, including the steps that the school took in response to the suicide attempt or threat.

The Superintendent or designee shall follow up with the parent/guardian and student in a timely manner to provide referrals to appropriate services as needed. If the parent/guardian does not access treatment for the student, the Superintendent or designee may meet with the parent/guardian to identify barriers to treatment and assist the family in providing follow-up care for the student. If follow-up care is still not provided, the Superintendent or designee shall consider whether ~~he/she~~ **it** is ~~required~~ **necessary**, pursuant to laws for mandated reporters of child neglect, to refer the matter to the local child protective services agency.

For any student returning to school after a mental health crisis, the principal or designee and/or school ~~psychologist~~ **counselor** may meet with the parents/guardians and, if appropriate, with the student to discuss re-entry and appropriate next steps to ensure the student's readiness for return to school **and determine the need for ongoing support**.

### **Postvention**

In the event that a student dies by suicide, the Superintendent or designee shall communicate with the student's parents/guardians to offer condolences, assistance, and resources. In accordance with the laws governing confidentiality of student record information, the Superintendent or designee shall consult with the parents/guardians regarding facts that may be divulged to other students, parents/guardians, and staff.

The Superintendent or designee shall implement procedures to address students' and staff's grief and to minimize the risk of imitative suicide or suicide contagion. ~~He/she~~ **The Superintendent or designee** shall provide students, parents/guardians, and staff with information, counseling, and/or referrals to community agencies as needed. School staff may receive assistance from school ~~psychologists~~ **counselors** or other mental health professionals in determining how best to discuss the suicide or attempted suicide with students.

Any response to media inquiries shall be handled by the district-designated spokesperson who shall not divulge confidential information. The district's response shall not sensationalize suicide and shall focus on the district's postvention plan and available resources.

After any suicide or attempted suicide by a student, 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.