

# Stockton USD

## Board Policy 5141.52

### Students

### Suicide Prevention

The Board of Trustees 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 measures, strategies, practices, and supports for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention.

In developing policy and procedures for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention, the Superintendent or designee shall consult with school and community stakeholders, school-employed mental health professionals, suicide prevention experts, and, in developing policy for grades K-6, the county mental health plan. (Education Code § 215)

School and community stakeholders and school mental health professionals with whom the Superintendent or designee shall consult with may include school health professionals, school counselors, administrators, other staff, parents/guardians, students, local health agencies and professionals, and community organizations. The Superintendent or designee may also collaborate with county and/or city governments in an effort to align District policy with any existing community suicide prevention plans.

### Prevention and Instruction

Suicide prevention strategies may include, but not be limited to:

1. Staff development on suicide awareness and prevention for teachers, interns, school counselors, and others who interact with students, including, as appropriate, substitute teachers, coaches, expanded day learning staff, crossing guards, tutors, and volunteers.
2. Instruction to students in problem-solving, coping, and resiliency 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. 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.
3. Methods 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.

4. Reviewing materials and resources used in awareness efforts and communications to ensure they align with best practices for safe and effective messaging about suicide.
5. Providing information to parents/guardians and caregivers regarding risk and protective factors, warning signs of suicide, 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.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. Counseling and other postvention strategies for helping students, staff, and others cope in the aftermath of a student's suicide.
9. Establishment of District and/or school-site crisis intervention team(s) to ensure the proper implementation and review of this policy and other District practices related to the emotional and behavioral wellness of students, including, but not limited to, the oversight of mental health and suicide prevention training, collaboration with community mental health organizations, identification of resources and organizations that provide evidence-based treatment, collaboration to build community response, and compliance with Education Code Section 215.
10. 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.

Whenever schools establish a peer counseling and/or peer resource system to provide support for students, peer counselors/leaders shall complete the suicide prevention curriculum, including identification of the warning signs of suicidal behavior and referral of a suicidal student to appropriate adults.

## **Youth Suicide Prevention, Intervention, Postvention Policy Kindergarten – 6<sup>th</sup> Grades**

This policy is a plan on how your school can support student wellness and suicide prevention. It is based on research and best practices in mental health and suicide prevention. Research has shown the importance of talking about sadness and thoughts of suicide. Even young kids can experience stress, depression, and thoughts of suicide. Students can learn skills that help them deal with stress in healthy ways.

Your school is a safe place with caring adults to help when you need support. You can learn about stress, sadness, and how to prevent thoughts of suicide at school.

### **Prevention**

#### **A. Talking about Suicide Prevention**

Your school looks at information to make sure it will help you talk about sadness and thoughts of suicide. It is important because the words we use can affect how students think about suicide. Your school also wants you to be able to talk about sadness and suicide so you can ask for help when you need it.

#### **B. Suicide Prevention Training and Education**

Every year teachers and school staff are trained. They learn about wellness and suicide prevention. Training includes information about student groups who are at higher risk of suicide such as students who:

- Have disabilities or physical or mental health concerns
- Are in foster care or experiencing homelessness
- Have different sexual orientation and gender identity (LGBTQ+)
- Have been bullied
- Have lost loved ones
- Have been affected by suicide
- Have had other hard life experiences
- Need support with stress and wellness

#### **C. Scope of Services (Staff)**

Your school may only provide support for what they are trained on. Your School

Counselor, School Nurse, and School Based Mental Health Clinician have special training to give help.

#### **D. Specialized Staff Training**

There is special training to teach school staff on how to help you.

#### **E. Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers Participation and Education**

Parents, guardians, and caregivers can go to activities and training. They can help develop and implement this policy. It is shared on the webpage and in the parent handbook.

#### **F. Student Participation and Education**

Students will learn about mental health, stress, sadness, and how to ask for help. You can participate in activities that raise awareness about wellness and suicide prevention.

### **Intervention and Referral**

#### **A. Staff**

School staff are trained in how to provide support, make referrals, and provide suicide intervention. This includes services for families served by Medi-Cal.

#### **B. Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers**

Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers can ask for help for their child. They can also ask for information on resources at school or in the community.

#### **C. Students**

Students are encouraged to tell a trusted staff member when they are feeling stress, sadness, or thoughts of suicide, or when they are worried about a friend. Students can refer themselves or a friend for help and support.

#### **D. Supporting Students after a Mental Health Crisis**

Your school will keep close contact with parents, guardians, caregivers and mental health professionals working with the student. They may also work with county mental health for families with Medi-Cal. They will help support the student's safety and wellness.

#### **E. Responding After a Suicide Death (Postvention)**

Your school knows that a death by suicide can be stressful. An action plan for students and staff is available when responding to a suicide death as part of the Crisis Response Plan.

References:

BP/AR 1220 - Citizen Advisory Committees  
BP 1400 - Relations Between Other Governmental Agencies and the Schools  
BP/AR 4131 - Staff Development  
BP 4231 - Staff Development  
BP 4331 - Staff Development  
BP 5131 - Conduct  
BP/AR 5131.6 - Alcohol and Other Drugs  
BP 5137 - Positive School Climate  
BP 5138 - Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation  
BP/AR 5141 - Health Care and Emergencies  
BP/AR 5141.6 - School Health Services  
BP/AR 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment  
BP/AR 5145.7 - Sexual Harassment  
BP 5145.9 - Hate-Motivated Behavior  
BP/AR 6142.8 - Comprehensive Health Education  
BP/AR 6164.2 - Guidance/Counseling Services

Legal References:

EDUCATION CODE

215-216 Student suicide prevention  
234.6 Bullying and harassment prevention information  
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

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