

CSBA Sample Board Policy

Students

BP 5141.52(a)

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Note: Education Code 215 **mandates** that the Governing Board of any district serving students in grades **K7-12** adopt a policy on student suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention (i.e., intervention conducted after a suicide) with specified components. ~~AB 1767 (Ch. 694, Statutes of 2019) amended Education Code 215 to mandate policy on suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention for students in grades K-6 beginning in the 2020-21 school year.~~ The required components are addressed in the following policy and the accompanying administrative regulation.

The following policy is consistent with the California Department of Education's Also see the California Department of Education's (CDE) Model Youth Suicide Prevention Policy, which also includes an extensive list of resources to assist in the prevention, intervention, and postvention of student suicide. developed pursuant to Education Code 215. Districts are encouraged to work closely with their county behavioral health department to identify and access resources at the local level.

The Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission developed a suicide prevention plan for the state which is published in Striving for Zero: California's Strategic Plan for Suicide Prevention 2020-2025, available on its web site. The plan presents strategic aims, with related goals, objectives, and an implementation schedule. Districts may find the strategic plan useful in learning more about the stigma associated with behavioral health needs, myths and misconceptions about suicidal behavior and its hinderance to prevention efforts, suicidal behavior, risk and protective factors, and best practices in suicide prevention.

The following policy and accompanying administrative regulation should be revised to reflect district practice and the grade levels offered by the district.

The Governing Board recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among youth, **prevention is a collective effort that requires stakeholder engagement**, 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. In an effort to reduce suicidal behavior, ~~and~~ its impact on students and families, **and other trauma associated with suicide**, the Superintendent or designee shall develop measures, ~~and~~ strategies, **practices, and supports** for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention.

~~Note: Pursuant to Education Code 215, as amended by AB 1767, the district's suicide prevention policy must be developed in consultation with school and community stakeholders, school-employed mental health professionals, suicide prevention experts, and, for policy for grades K-6, the county mental health plan. According to CDE's Model Youth Suicide Prevention Policy, school-employed mental health professionals may include school counselors, psychologists, social workers, and nurses. CDE's model policy also includes consultation with administrators, other school staff, parents/guardians, students, local health agencies and professionals, law enforcement, and community organizations.~~

It is recommended that districts also consult with legal counsel and the district's risk manager or insurance carrier, as appropriate.

SUICIDE PREVENTION (continued)

In developing policy and **procedures strategies** for suicide prevention, ~~and intervention, and postvention,~~ the Superintendent or designee shall consult with school and community stakeholders, ~~such as administrators, other staff, parents/guardians and students; school-employed mental health professionals, such as school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and school nurses; suicide prevention experts, such as local health agencies, mental health professionals, and community organizations; law enforcement; and,~~ in developing policy for grades K-6, the county mental health plan. (Education Code 215)

(cf. 1220 - Citizen Advisory Committees)

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

Note: The following optional paragraph may be revised to reflect district practice. Education Code 215 does not define "school and community stakeholders" or "school-employed mental health professionals" who must be consulted in the development of policy. The following examples are consistent with CSBA and CDE recommendations.

School and community stakeholders and school mental health professionals with whom the Superintendent or designee shall consult may include district and school administrators, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, school nurses, other staff, parents/guardians and caregivers, students, local health agencies, mental health professionals, community organizations, law enforcement, legal counsel, and/or the district's risk manager or insurance carrier. 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.

Note: Education Code 215, as amended by AB 1767, requires that the district's policy for students in grades K-6 be age appropriate and delivered and discussed in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of young students. The following paragraph is for use by districts that serve K-6 students, and may be revised as appropriate for the student population served by the district.

~~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:

Note: Education Code 215, as amended by AB 1767, mandates that the district's policy address any training on suicide awareness and prevention to be provided to teachers of students in all grade levels served by the district. See the accompanying administrative regulation for additional language fulfilling this mandate. In addition, Education Code 49604 encourages each district to provide suicide prevention training at least once to each middle, junior high, and high school counselor. Item #1 ~~may should~~ be revised to specify ~~the other~~ categories of employees who will receive the training.

SUICIDE PREVENTION (continued)

1. Staff development on suicide awareness and prevention for teachers, **interns**, school counselors, and others **district employees** who interact with students, **including, as appropriate, substitute teachers, coaches, expanded day learning staff, crossing guards, tutors, and volunteers**, as described in the accompanying administrative regulation

(cf. 1240 - Volunteer Assistance)

(cf. 4112.21 - Interns)

(cf. 4121 - Temporary/Substitute Personnel)

(cf. 4127/4227/4327 - Temporary Athletic Team Coaches)

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)

(cf. 5142 - Safety)

(cf. 5148 - Child Care and Development)

(cf. 5148.2 - Before/After School Programs)

(cf. 6145.2 - Athletic Competition)

Note: Items #2-79 below reflect **optional** strategies for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention and may be revised to reflect district practice.

2. Instruction to students in problem-solving, **and 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

(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. 5145.71 - Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures)

(cf. 5145.9 - Hate-Motivated Behavior)

4. **The review of materials and resources used in awareness efforts and communications to ensure they align with best practices for safe and effective messaging about suicide**

SUICIDE PREVENTION (continued)

- 54.** The provision of information to parents/guardians **and caregivers** regarding risk **and protective** factors, ~~and~~ warning signs of suicide, the severity of the suicide problem among youth, the district's suicide prevention curriculum, **the district's suicide prevention policy and procedures**, basic steps for helping suicidal youth, **the importance of communicating with appropriate staff if suicide risk is present or suspected, access to suicide prevention training**, and/or school and community resources that can help youth in crisis
- 65.** 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
- 76.** Crisis intervention procedures for addressing suicide threats or attempts
- 87.** Counseling and other postvention strategies for helping students, staff, and others cope in the aftermath of a student's suicide

Note: The National Association of School Psychologists recommends that the district and/or school sites create a suicide prevention crisis team to assist in effectively identifying and intervening with students who are at risk of suicidal behavior, including adoption and implementation of policies and procedures. It is recommended that such teams include, at a minimum, administration, mental health staff, and school security personnel. The same crisis intervention team may be established to address broader mental health concerns as described in BP 5141.5 - Mental Health.

- 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 215**

(cf. 5141.5 - Mental Health)

Note: Education Code 215 **mandates** that the district's policy specifically address the needs of high-risk groups, including, but not limited to, those listed in the following paragraph. See the accompanying administrative regulation for additional language fulfilling this mandate.

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)

SUICIDE PREVENTION (continued)

Note: The following **two paragraphs are is** for use by districts that serve students in grades K-6. ~~Education Code 215, as amended by AB 1767, mandates that the district's policy for students in grades K-6 ensure proper coordination and consultation with the county mental health plan if a referral is made for mental health or related services on behalf of a student who is a Medi-Cal beneficiary.~~

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)

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. 5141.6 - School Health Services)

District employees shall act only within the authorization and scope of their credential or license. Nothing in this policy shall be construed as authorizing or encouraging district employees to diagnose or treat mental illness unless they are specifically licensed and employed to do so. (Education Code 215)

Note: Education Code 215 requires that the district's student suicide prevention policy be updated at least every five years. Given the severity of the issue and importance of maintaining an up-to-date suicide prevention policy, CSBA and CDE recommend reviewing and updating this policy annually. The following paragraph may be revised to reflect district practice.

The Board shall review, and update as necessary, this policy at least every five years. **The Board may, at its discretion, review the policy more frequently.** (Education Code 215)

The Superintendent or designee shall periodically review district data pertaining to school climate and reports of suicidal ideation, attempts, or death to identify patterns or trends and make recommendations regarding program development.

Note: Education Code 234.6, as added by AB 34 (Ch. 282, Statutes of 2019), requires districts, beginning in the 2020-21 school year, to ensure that the district's suicide prevention policies for grades K-6 and 7-12 be readily accessible in a prominent location on the district's web site in a manner that is easily accessible to parents/guardians and students.

The Superintendent or designee shall post this policy on the district's web site, in a prominent location and in a manner that is easily accessible to parents/guardians and students. (Education Code 234.6)

Legal Reference: (see next page)

SUICIDE PREVENTION (continued)

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 **Counseling; 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

5850-5886 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 Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve, 2019

Health Education Content Standards for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve, 2008

Health Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve, 2019

Model Youth Suicide Prevention Policy

CALSCHLS PUBLICATIONS

California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS)

California School Parent Survey (CSPS)

California School Staff Survey (CSSS)

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION PUBLICATIONS

School Connectedness: Strategies for Increasing Protective Factors Among Youth, 2009

EACH MIND MATTERS: CALIFORNIA'S MENTAL HEALTH MOVEMENT PUBLICATIONS

Making Headlines: Guide to Engaging the Media in Suicide Prevention in California, 2012

HEARD ALLIANCE PUBLICATIONS

K-12 Toolkit for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention, 2017

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY COMMUNICATIONS PUBLICATIONS

Striving for Zero: California's Strategic Plan for Suicide Prevention 2020-2025

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS PUBLICATIONS

Preventing Suicide: Guidelines for Administrators and Crisis Teams, 2015

SUICIDE PREVENTION RESOURCE CENTER PUBLICATIONS

After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools, 2nd Edition, 2018

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES PUBLICATIONS

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

Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for High Schools, 2012

Management Resources continued: (see next page)

SUICIDE PREVENTION (continued)

Management Resources: (continued)

WEB SITES

American Academy of Pediatrics: <https://www.healthychildren.org>

American Association of Suicidology: <http://www.suicidology.org>

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention: <https://afsp.org>

American Psychological Association: <http://www.apa.org>

American School Counselor Association: <https://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 Services:

<http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/MH>

California Mental Health Services Authority: <https://www.calmhsa.org>

CalSCHLS: <https://calschls.org>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Mental Health: <http://www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth>

Crisis Text Line: <https://www.crisistextline.org>

Each Mind Matters: California's Mental Health Movement: <https://emmresourcecenter.org>

HEARD Alliance: <https://www.heardalliance.org>

Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission: <https://mhsoc.ca.gov>

National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention: <https://theactionalliance.org>

National Association of School Psychologists: <https://www.nasponline.org>

National Child Traumatic Stress Network: <https://www.nctsn.org>

National Institute for Mental Health: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov>

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: <https://www.samhsa.gov>

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

Suicide Prevention Messaging: <https://suicidepreventionmessaging.org>

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

~~Suicide Prevention Lifeline: <https://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>