

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)

4. The provision of information to parents/guardians regarding risk factors and warning signs of suicide, the severity of the youth suicide problem, the district's suicide prevention curriculum, basic steps for helping suicidal youth, and/or school and community resources that can help youth in crisis

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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

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*

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

CALIFORNIA 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

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES PUBLICATIONS

National Strategy for Suicide Prevention: Goals and Objectives for Action, 2001

WEB SITES

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

California Department of Education, Mental Health: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/cg/mh>

California Department of Mental Health, Children and Youth Programs:

http://www.dmh.ca.gov/Services_and_Programs/Children_and_Youth

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

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

SUICIDE PREVENTION (continued)

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