

<p>1. Purpose SC 1526</p>	<p>819. SUICIDE AWARENESS, PREVENTION AND RESPONSE</p> <p>The Board is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its students and school community. This policy supports federal, state and local efforts to provide education on youth suicide awareness and prevention; establish methods of prevention, intervention, and response to suicide or suicide attempt; and to promote access to suicide awareness and prevention resources.</p>
<p>2. Authority Title 22 Sec. 12.12</p>	<p>In compliance with state law and regulations, and in support of the district's suicide prevention measures, information received in confidence from a student may be revealed to the student's parents/guardians, the building principal or other appropriate authority when the health, welfare or safety of the student or any other person is deemed to be at risk.</p>
<p>3. Guidelines</p>	<p>The district shall utilize a multifaceted approach to suicide prevention which integrates school and community-based supports.</p>
<p>SC 1526</p>	<p>The district shall notify district employees, students and parents/guardians of this policy and shall post the policy on the district's website.</p>
<p>SC 1526</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SUICIDE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION EDUCATION</p> <p><u>Protocols for Administration of Student Education</u> Students shall receive age-appropriate education on the importance of safe and healthy choices, coping strategies, how to recognize risk factors and warning signs, as well as help-seeking strategies for self or others including how to engage school resources and refer friends for help.</p> <p>Lessons shall contain information on comprehensive health and wellness, including emotional, behavioral and social skills development.</p> <p><u>Protocols for Administration of Employee Education</u> All district employees, including but not limited to secretaries, coaches, bus drivers, custodians and cafeteria workers, shall receive information regarding risk factors, warning signs, response procedures, referrals, and resources regarding youth suicide prevention. At a minimum, employees shall review this Suicide Awareness, Prevention and Response Policy and any administrative procedures or guidelines developed in conjunction with this Policy.</p>
<p>SC 1526 Pol. 333</p>	<p>As part of the district's professional development plan, professional educators in school buildings serving students in grades six (6) through twelve (12) shall participate in four (4) hours of youth suicide awareness and prevention training every five (5) years.</p> <p>Additional professional development in risk assessment and crisis intervention shall be provided to guidance counselors, district mental health professionals and school nurses when appropriate.</p>

Resources for Parents/Guardians

The district may provide parents/guardians with resources including, but not limited to, health promotion and suicide risk, including characteristics and warning signs; and information about local behavioral/mental health resources.

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METHODS OF PREVENTION

The methods of prevention utilized by the district include, but are not limited to, early identification and support for students at risk; education for students, staff and parents/guardians; and delegation of responsibility for planning and coordination of suicide prevention efforts.

Suicide Prevention Coordinators

District-Wide -

The Executive Director of Human Resources and the Director of Student Assistance Program shall, jointly, fulfill the role of district-wide suicide prevention coordinators. The district suicide prevention coordinators shall be responsible for planning and coordinating implementation of this policy.

The Board directs the Superintendent and the Suicide Prevention Coordinators to oversee the drafting of Administrative Procedures used to aide in the implementation of this Policy.

Building Level -

Each building shall have a Suicide Response Team. Each building level Suicide Response Team shall consist of: Building Principal, Assistant Principal, school nurse, guidance counselor (if any assigned to building), mental health specialist (if any assigned to building), members of the building SAP team, and any other individual appointed by Building Principal.

Members of the Suicide Response Team are responsible for providing the assessment, intervention, crisis response and on-going communications with student, family and outside mental health service providers as required by this Policy.

Early Identification Procedures

Early identification of individuals who are exhibiting suicide risk factors or warning signs is crucial to the district's suicide prevention efforts. To promote awareness, district employees, students and parents/guardians should be educated about suicidal risk factors and warning signs.

Examples of suicide risk factors and suicide warning signs are identified in the Administrative Procedures implementing this Policy.

If the school suspects that the student's risk status is the result of abuse or neglect, school staff shall immediately notify Erie County Office of Children and Youth Services pursuant to reporting requirements of the Child Protective Services Law.

If the parent/guardian refuses to cooperate and district officials believe the parent/guardians' failure to cooperate rises to the level of child abuse or neglect, school staff shall immediately notify Erie County Office of Children and Youth Services pursuant to reporting requirements of the Child Protective Services Law.

If the parent/guardian refuses to cooperate and school officials are concerned about the student's immediate safety, the school personnel who directly witnessed the expressed suicide thought or intention shall pursue a Section 302 involuntary mental health assessment by calling Erie County Emergency Services at [insert telephone number] and ask for a delegate. If a Section 302 involuntary mental health assessment is granted, the first-hand witness is required to act as the Petitioner, with support from the Building Administration, the Suicide Response Team and the Suicide Prevention Coordinators.

Pol. 103.1, 113,
113.2, 113.3,
114
Pol. 103.1, 113,
113.2, 113.3,
114

Students With Disabilities

For students with disabilities who are identified as being at risk for suicide or who attempt suicide, the appropriate team (IEP team or Section 504 team) shall be notified and shall address the student's needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.

If a student is identified as being at risk for suicide or attempts suicide and the student may require special education services or accommodations under IDEA, Section 504 or any other applicable law, the Director of Special Education shall be notified and shall take action to address the student's needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.

Documentation of Suicide Intervention

The district shall document observations, recommendations and actions conducted throughout the intervention and assessment process including verbal and written communications with students, parents/guardians and mental health service providers.

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METHODS OF RESPONSE TO SUICIDE OR SUICIDE ATTEMPT

The methods of response to a suicide or a suicide attempt utilized by the district include, but are not limited to:

1. Identifying and training the school crisis response/crisis intervention team.

Referral Procedures

Any district employee who has identified a student with any combination of suicide risk factors and/or warning signs and who believes the student may be at risk for contemplating suicide or who has a specific indication that a student may be contemplating suicide, shall refer the student to the Suicide Response Team in that student's building for further assessment and intervention.

A district-approved suicide assessment instrument may be used by trained mental health staff such as counselors, psychologists, social workers.

The Administrative Procedures drafted to implement this Policy shall address in more detail the assessment procedures to be utilized by District staff.

Documentation

The district shall document the reasons for referral, including specific warning signs and risk factors identified as indications that the student may be at risk.

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METHODS OF INTERVENTION

The methods of intervention utilized by the district include, but are not limited to:

1. responding to assessment results whereby a student is identified as being at increased risk of suicide,
2. responding to actual suicide threats,
3. responding to suicide attempts in school,
4. responding to suicide attempts outside of school, and
5. responding to completed suicide.

The Administrative Procedures shall address all of the above methods of intervention and also shall address the development of an emotional or mental health safety plan for students identified as being at increased risk of suicide.

Procedures for Students Specifically Identified as Being At-Risk

1. Parents/Guardians of a student identified as being at risk of suicide shall be notified by the school.
2. The district shall create an emotional or mental health safety plan to support a student and the student's family if the student has been identified as being at increased risk of suicide.
3. The district shall identify mental health service providers to whom students can be referred for further assessment and assistance and share this information with the parent/guardians.

Mental health service providers — may include, but not be limited to, hospital emergency departments, psychiatric hospitals, community mental health centers, psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and primary care providers.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Determining the roles and responsibilities of each crisis response team member. 3. Notifying students, employees and parents/guardians. 4. Working with families. 5. Responding appropriately to the media. 6. Collaborating with community providers. <p>The Administrative Procedures implementing this Policy shall contain guidance for responding to a suicidal act or attempt on school grounds or during a school-sponsored event.</p>
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<p>Pol. 103.1, 113, 113.2, 113.3, 117, 204</p>	<p><u>Re-Entry Procedures</u></p> <p>A student's excusal from school attendance after a mental health crisis and the student's return to school shall be consistent with state and federal laws and regulations.</p> <p>Members of the Suicide Response Team shall meet with the parents/guardians of a student returning to school after a mental health crisis, and, if appropriate, meet with the student to discuss re-entry and applicable next steps to ensure the student's readiness to return to school.</p> <p>When authorized by the student's parent/guardian, the designated district employee shall coordinate with the appropriate outside mental health care providers.</p> <p>The designated district employee will periodically check in, as needed, with the student to facilitate the transition back into the school community and address any concerns.</p> <p>The Administrative Procedures implementing this Policy shall address in more detail the Re-Entry Procedures district staff should follow.</p>
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REPORT PROCEDURES

<p>SC 1526</p>	<p>Effective documentation assists in preserving the safety of the student and ensuring communication among school staff, parents/guardians and mental health service providers.</p> <p>When a district employee takes notes on any conversations or situations involving or relating to an at-risk student, the notes should contain only factual or directly observed information, not opinions or hearsay.</p> <p>As stated in this Policy, district employees shall be responsible for effective documentation of incidents involving suicide prevention, intervention and response.</p>
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The Suicide Response Teams in the buildings shall provide the Suicide Prevention Coordinators with a copy of all reports and documentation regarding students who have been identified as being at-risk for suicide. Information and reports shall be provided, as appropriate, to guidance counselors, district mental health professionals and school nurses to best ensure student safety.

SUICIDE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION RESOURCES

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A listing of resources regarding suicide awareness and prevention follows:

A comprehensive set of resources for youth suicide awareness and prevention is accessible through the Department at www.education.pa.gov

PA Youth Suicide Prevention Initiative - <http://payspi.org/>

Oct. 2014 Dear Colleague Letter related to peer harassment of students with disabilities:

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/publications.html#Section504>

Suicide Prevention Resource Center - <http://www.sprc.org/>

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention - <http://www.afsp.org/>

References:

School Code — 24 P.S. Sec. 1526

State Board of Education Regulations — 22 PA Code Sec. 12.12

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