

Riverside County Office of Education
Board Policy 5141.52 Suicide Prevention

STUDENTS

SUBJECT: Suicide Prevention

The County Board of Education and County Superintendent of Schools recognize 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 County Superintendent or designee shall develop measures and strategies for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention.

In developing measures and strategies for use by the County Office of Education, the County Superintendent or designee may consult with school health professionals, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, administrators, other staff, parents/guardians, students, suicide prevention experts such as local health agencies, mental health professionals, and community organizations. and, in developing policy for grades K-6, the county mental health plan. (Education Code 215)

(cf. 1400 - Relations Between Other Governmental Agencies and the Riverside County Office of Education)

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:

1. Staff development on suicide awareness and prevention for teachers, school counselors, and other employees who interact with students.

(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)

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(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 County Office of Education's suicide prevention curriculum, basic steps for helping suicidal youth, and/or school and community resources that can help youth in crisis
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)

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)

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.

The Board shall review, and update as necessary, this policy at least every five years. (Education Code 215)

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:

EDUCATION CODE

215 Student suicide prevention policies

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

PENAL CODE

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11164-11174.3 Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting 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

Health Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve, 2003

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION PUBLICATIONS

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

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS PUBLICATIONS

Preventing Suicide, Guidelines for Administrators and Crisis Teams, 2015

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES PUBLICATIONS Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for High Schools, 2012

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

WEB SITES

American Association of Suicidology American Foundation for Suicide Prevention American Psychological Association American School Counselor Association

California Department of Education, Mental Health

California Department of Health Care Services, Suicide Prevention Program Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Mental Health

National Association of School Psychologists National Institute for Mental Health

Trevor Project

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration