

William S. Hart UHSD

Board Policy

Students

Suicide Prevention

BP 5141.52 (a)

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. In an effort 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.

The policy shall be written to ensure that a school employee acts only within the authorization and scope of the employee's credential or license. Nothing in this section shall be construed as authorizing or encouraging a school employee to diagnose or treat mental illness unless the employee is specifically licensed and employed to do so. (Education Code 215 (a))

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/or community organizations.

(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, coping skills, and school and community resources to promote students' mental, emotional, and social health and well-being as well as instruction in recognizing and appropriately responding to warning sign 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. 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 suicide problem among youth, 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)

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

Legal Reference: see next page

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

32280-32289 Comprehensive safety plan

49060-49079 Student records

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

5850-5883 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: <http://www.suicidology.org>

Date

adopted: June 14, 2017

Revised:

WILLIAM S. HART UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Santa Clarita, California