

Related Entries: (Not identified at this time)

Suicide Prevention, Awareness, and Screening

The School Board recognizes that suicide is one of the leading causes of death for Florida's youth. To address the prevalence of student suicide, the Board believes there must be a partnership between families, the community, and schools. It is critical for families and community members to communicate with and provide information to school staff to identify students at risk of suicide. The School 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. As mandated by law, the approved instructional materials provided by the Florida Office of Suicide Prevention will be provided to all instructional and administrative staff. Further, student personnel services staff, will be responsible for providing suicide prevention and awareness training and resources to students and staff.

(1) Signs of Suicidal Ideation:

All school personnel should be alert to signs of suicide ideation and to students who threaten or attempt suicide. Suicide ideation is the process of fantasizing, planning, practicing, and motivating oneself to commit suicide. Any such signs or the report of such signs from another student or staff member should be taken with the utmost seriousness. Families, community members, and students are encouraged to report any such signs to the Principal.

(2) Suicide Risk Assessment:

All schools and local mobile response teams shall use the same suicide risk assessment instruments approved by the FLDOE pursuant to F.S. 1012.583. Only school-based mental health service providers who have been trained in the use of the instruments utilized by the District may give a risk assessment to a student expressing suicidal ideation or suicidal intent.

A "school-based mental health services provider" means a school psychologist certified under F.A.C. 6A- 4.0311, a school social worker certified under F.A.C. 6A-4.035, a school counselor certified under F.A.C. 6A- 4.0181, or a mental health professional licensed under F.S. Chapters 490 or 491, who is employed or contracted by the District to provide mental health services in its schools

44 If a trained school-based mental health services provider is unavailable, a contracted
45 certified or licensed mental health provider may evaluate students in the District for suicide
46 risk, including the mobile response teams serving the District.
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48 When a suicide risk assessment results in the initiation of an involuntary examination, the
49 Principal is required to make a reasonable attempt, as outlined in Board Policy 4.222, to
50 notify the student's parent(s) before the student is removed from school, school
51 transportation, or a school-sponsored activity, unless notification is delayed pursuant to
52 F.S. 1002.20.
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54 When a suicide risk assessment results in a change in related services or monitoring, a
55 student's parent(s) must be notified as soon as possible.
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57 (3) Authority:
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59 In compliance with state law and regulations, and in support of the district's suicide
60 prevention measures, information received in confidence from a student may be
61 revealed to the student's parents/guardians, the principal or other appropriate
62 authority when the health, welfare or safety of the student or any other person is
63 deemed to be at risk.
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65 The superintendent or designee shall develop administrative procedures for
66 implementation of this policy, including student and staff training, providing
67 recommended guidelines for responding to a suicide threat.
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69 (4) Guidelines:
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71 The district shall utilize a multifaceted approach to suicide prevention which
72 integrates school and community-based supports. The district shall notify district
73 employees, students and parents/guardians of this policy and shall post the policy on the
74 district's website.
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76 (5) Suicide Awareness and Prevention Education:
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78 (a) Protocols for Administration of Student Education:
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80 Students shall receive age-appropriate education on the importance of safe and
81 healthy choices, coping strategies, how to recognize risk factors and warning
82 signs, as well as help-seeking strategies for self or others including how to
83 engage school resources and refer friends for help. Lessons shall contain
84 information on comprehensive health and wellness, including emotional,
85 behavioral, and social skills development.
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87 (b) Training:
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89 Professional development training in youth suicide prevention shall be
90 provided for student services staff, administration, and instructional staff.

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Further, additional professional development training regarding risk assessment and intervention shall be provided to school mental health professionals and school nurses.

The training identified herein shall foster an understanding of how to use an intervention procedure which includes the following:

- Step 1 – Stabilization
- Step 2 – Assessment of the Risk
- Step 3 – Use of Appropriate Risk Procedure
- Step 4 – Communication with Appropriate Parties
- Step 5 – Follow-up

(c) Student Identification Card:

All student identification cards must include the telephone numbers for national or statewide crisis and suicide hotlines.

(d) Resources for Parent/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.

(e) 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.

(f) Early Identification and Referral:

Early identification of individuals with one or more suicidal risk factors or of individuals exhibiting 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. Any district employee who has identified a student with one or more risk factors or who has an indication that a student may be contemplating suicide, shall refer the student for further assessment and intervention.

(g) Methods for Intervention:

For student at risk, the methods of intervention utilized by the district include, but are not limited to, responding to suicide threats, suicide attempts in school, suicide attempts outside of school, and completed suicide. Suicide intervention

- 138 procedures shall address the development of an emotional or mental health
139 safety plan for students identified as being at increased risk of suicide.
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- 141 (h) Response to Suicide or Suicide Attempt:
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- 143 The first school personnel on the scene of a suicide or suicide attempt must
144 follow the school entity's crisis response procedures, and shall immediately
145 notify the principal or designee. The school entity will immediately notify the
146 parents or guardians of the affected student(s).
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- 148 (i) School Safety Plan:
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- 150 1. Reporting Procedures:
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- 152 Effective documentation assists in preserving the safety of the student and
153 ensuring communication among school staff, parents/guardians and
154 mental health service providers.
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- 156 District employees shall be responsible for effective documentation of
157 incidents involving suicide prevention, intervention and response pursuant
158 to Board Policy 4.222.
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- 160 (6) Suicide Prevention Certified School:
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- 162 (a) A school must meet the following criteria to be considered a "Suicide
163 Prevention Certified School":
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- 165 1. All instructional personnel at the school must complete two hours of
166 approved youth suicide awareness, and prevention training, and repeat
167 that training every three years.
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- 169 2. The requirement for all instructional personnel to complete youth
170 suicide awareness and prevention training is included in the district's
171 continuing education or master in-service plan;
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- 173 3. The school has at least two school-based mental health service providers
174 that are qualified to conduct a suicide risk assessment using an FDOE-
175 approved screening instrument; and
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- 177 4. The school or district has a policy requiring the use of an approved
178 suicide risk assessment instrument administered by a school-based
179 mental health services provider prior to requesting or initiating an
180 involuntary examination due to concerns about a student's suicide risk.
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- 182 (b) The Superintendent will notify the FDOE of all schools qualifying for this
183 designation.
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185 (c) Each school shall also post on its own website whether it is a Suicide Prevention
186 Certified School, and the District shall post on its website a list of the Suicide
187 Prevention Certified Schools in the District.
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189 (7) Liability:

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191 Pursuant to state law, participating in the training does not create a duty of care of the
192 basis of liability.
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194 (8) Suicide Awareness and Prevention Resources:

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196 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
197 Toll-free number 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255)
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199 *The Online Lifeline Crisis Chat is free and confidential. You'll be connected to a*
200 *skilled, trained counselor in your area.*
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202 National Domestic Violence Hotline
203 Call 1-800-799-7233 and TTY 1-800-787-3224
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205 <https://www.fldoe.org/mental-health/>
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207 More resources can be found at the Mental Health and Wellness Portal on the
208 district's website:
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210 https://www.leeschools.net/student_support/mental_health_and_wellness_portal
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212 **STATUTORY AUTHORITY:** 1001.32(2), 1001.42, 1001.43., 1008.386, 1012.583, F.S.,
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214 14.20195.
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