

## **Procedure Suicide Prevention**

### **A. Prevention**

Suicide prevention strategies may include, but are not be limited to, efforts to promote a positive school climate that enhances students' feelings of connectedness with the school and each other, and is characterized by caring staff and harmonious interrelationships among students.

#### **1. Student Health Education Program**

The district's health education program will promote the healthy mental, emotional, and social development of students. Developmentally appropriate suicide prevention instruction will be made available to students as part of the health education curriculum and other awareness activities.

#### **2. Student Responsibility**

The district will encourage students to notify a teacher, principal, counselor or other adult when they are experiencing depression or thoughts of suicide or when they suspect or have knowledge of another student's despair or suicidal intentions.

#### **3. Staff Training**

The district will provide annual training to all staff related to suicide prevention. The training will help staff identify and respond to students at risk of suicide and explain the procedures that staff should follow when they identify a student at risk of suicide or in emotional crisis.

#### **4. Prevention Planning- Student Support Teams**

Each school will designate specific individuals to be part of a student support team. This team will include the school counselor and other staff trained to respond to students in emotional crisis. Staff members who identify a student at risk of suicide or in emotional crisis are expected to promptly contact a member of the student support team regarding the suicide threat. Members of the student support team may include school counselors, psychologists, nurses, principals and/or assistant principals. In some cases, the team might also include the student's parent/guardian, local law enforcement or mental health agencies. Student support team members will be trained on suicide prevention and responding to students in emotional crisis.

### **B. Intervention**

Whenever a staff member suspects or has knowledge of a student's suicidal intentions he/she will take proper steps to support the student and promptly notify the principal or school counselor. The principal or counselor will then notify the student's parents/guardians as soon as possible, unless notification of the parents will jeopardize the student's safety. The district may also refer the student to mental health resources in the community. Additionally, the principal or designee will ensure the student's physical safety by one of the following as appropriate:

1. Secure immediate medical treatment if a suicide attempt has occurred;
2. Secure emergency assistance if a suicidal act is being actively threatened;
3. Keep the student under continuous adult supervision until the parent/guardian and/or appropriate support agent or agency can be contacted and has the opportunity to intervene;
4. Document the incident and disposition in writing; and
5. Provide access to counselors or other appropriate personnel to listen to and support students and staff as necessary.

### **C. Post-Event**

In the event that a suicide occurs or is attempted, the principal or designee will follow the procedures contained in the Suicide Prevention Plan. After consultation with the Superintendent

or designee and the student's parents/guardians about facts that may be divulged in accordance with the laws governing confidentiality of student record information, the principal or designee may provide students, parents/guardians, and staff with information, counseling and/or referrals to community agencies as needed. School administrators may receive assistance from school counselors or other mental health professionals in determining how best to discuss the suicide or attempted suicide with students and staff.

#### **D. Communications**

The district's suicide prevention policy and procedure and the suicide prevention plan will be available for all staff, students and community through the district website. All requests for specific information regarding an incident will be directed to the building principal or designee.

#### **E. Resources**

The district will utilize school counselors, the crisis telephone hotline, physician/health care providers, mental health specialists, coaches and appropriate parent and community resources for prevention and intervention. The district will also develop partnerships with community organizations and agencies and a memorandum of understanding with at least one of these programs for referral of students to support services. Community resources for prevention and crisis response will be included in the district suicide prevention plan and updated annually. These resources include but are not limited to:

1. Prevention Resources:
  - a. Washington Youth Suicide Prevention Program, [www.yspp.org](http://www.yspp.org), 206-297-5922;
  - b. Washington State Department of Health, [www.doh.wa.gov/preventsuicide](http://www.doh.wa.gov/preventsuicide); 360-236-2800;
  - c. 211 System – This is an information referral service, it assists with providing resources in your community.
2. Crisis Response Resources:
  - a. Emergency Response: 911;
  - b. Pierce County Crisis Line 1-800-576-7764;
  - c. National LifeLine: 1-800-247-8255;
  - d. Pierce County Domestic Violence HelpLine - 1-800-764-2420;
  - e. National Sexual Assault Hotline - 1-800-656-HOPE; and
  - f. LGBTQ Help Line 1-866-488-7386

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