

5350 PUPIL SUICIDE PREVENTION

The Board of Education recognizes that depression and self-destruction are problems of increasing severity among children and adolescents. A pupil under severe stress cannot benefit fully from the educational program and may pose a threat to himself or herself or others.

The Board directs all school personnel (including employees, volunteers and interns) to be alert to the pupil who exhibits behavioral warning signs of potential self-destruction or who threatens or attempts suicide. Any such signs or the report of any such signs received from any source should be taken with the utmost seriousness and reported immediately to the building principal or designee, who shall notify the pupil's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and other professional staff members in accordance with administrative regulations.

A potentially suicidal pupil shall be interviewed by a designated Crisis Team Member, such as the psychologist and/or social worker for appropriate evaluation and/or recommendation for independent medical or psychiatric services, in accordance with law. A list of designated psychologists and social workers will be developed in consultation with the Director of Special Services at the beginning of each school year and will be maintained in each school building. In the event that the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) objects to the recommended evaluation or indicates an unwillingness to cooperate in the best interests of the pupil, the principal or designee may contact the New Jersey Department of Children and Families, Division of Child Protection and Permanency, (CP&P), to request the agency's intervention on the pupil's behalf.

Any school personnel with reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a student has attempted or completed suicide must report the information to the Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health and Addition Services pursuant to N.J.S.A. 30:9A-24.a.

In accordance with the provision of N.J.S.A 18A:6-111 and 18A:6-112, as part of the required professional development for teachers as outlined in the N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.1 et seq., every teaching staff member must complete at least two hours of instruction in suicide prevention, to be provided by a licensed health care professional with experience in mental health issues, in each professional development period. The instruction in suicide prevention shall include information on the relationship between the risk of suicide and incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying and information on reducing the risk of suicide in pupils who are members of communities identified as having members at high risk of suicide.

The Superintendent shall prepare and disseminate regulations for the guidance of staff members in recognizing the pupil who contemplates suicide, in responding to threatened or attempted suicide, and in preventing contagion when a pupil commits suicide.

N.J.S.A. 18A:6-111; 18A:6-112; 18A:6-113;  
N.J.S.A. 30:9A-24a.  
N.J.A.C. 6A:16-11.1(b)  
N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-~~3-15-1~~, et. seq.

Initial Adoption: April 2, 2001  
Previous Adoptions: August 23, 2011 & February 24, 2014

First Reading: February 20, 2018 ~~January 27, 2014~~  
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