

SUICIDE PREVENTION, INTERVENTION, AND POSTVENTION

I. Prevention

- A. Staff Training: Suicide prevention training shall be designed to help staff identify and respond to students at risk of suicide. The training shall be offered annually under the direction of a district counselor/psychologist and/or in cooperation with one or more community mental health agencies and include information on:
1. Identifying risk factors, such as previous suicide attempt(s), history of depression or mental illness, substance use problems, family history of suicide or violence, feelings of isolation, interpersonal conflicts, a recent severe stressor or loss, family instability, and other factors.
 2. Warning signs that may indicate suicidal intentions, including changes in students' appearance, personality or behavior
 3. Research-based instructional strategies for teaching the suicide prevention curriculum and promoting mental and emotional health
 4. School and community resources and services
 5. District procedures for intervening when a student attempts, threatens, or discloses the desire to die by suicide
- B. Student Training: Student suicide prevention strategies may include, but not be limited to:
1. Efforts to promote a positive school climate that enhances students' feelings of connectedness with the school and is characterized by caring staff and harmonious interrelationships among students.
 2. A comprehensive health education program that promotes the healthy mental, emotional, and social development of students including, but not limited to, the development of problem-solving skills, coping skills, and self-esteem. Suicide prevention instruction shall be incorporated into the health education curriculum in the secondary grades. Such instruction shall be aligned with state content standards and shall be designed to help students analyze signs of depression and self-destructive behaviors, including potential suicide, and to identify suicide prevention strategies.

II. Intervention

- A. The Board directs all school personnel to be alert to the student who exhibits signs of significant depression or who threatens or attempts suicide. Any such signs or the report of such signs from another student or staff member should be taken seriously and must be reported to a school administrator and school psychologist or school counselor.
- B. The Director of Special Services shall develop and implement administrative guidelines whereby members of the professional staff understand how to use a prevention, intervention and postvention suicide protocol.
- C. Throughout any intervention, it is essential that Board policies and District guidelines regarding confidentiality be observed.

III. Postvention

- A. Staff will reference PWSSD's Prevention, Intervention and Postvention Suicide protocol for details regarding steps to take after a completed suicide including, but not limited to:
 - 1. School administrator checklist
 - 2. Crisis team checklist
 - 3. Media
 - 4. Parent notification
 - 5. Student notification
- B. Guidelines for Memorials: Adolescents are especially vulnerable to the risk of suicide contagion, it's equally important to memorialize the student in a way that doesn't inadvertently glamorize or romanticize either the student or the death. Schools can do this by seeking opportunities to emphasize the connection between suicide and underlying mental health issues such as depression or anxiety that can cause substantial psychological pain but may not be apparent to others (or that may manifest as behavioral problems or substance abuse).
- C. Any officer, employee, or volunteer of this Board who, in good faith, attempt to prevent suicide by a student is immune from civil liability for acts or omissions in respect to the suicide or attempted suicide.

Legal reference:
Kelson v City of Springfield, 767 F2d 651 (9th Cir .1985)
Sections 118.125, 118.126, 118.295, Wis. Stats.

Cross reference:
Administrative Guideline 5350 – Suicide Prevention Procedures

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Adapted from Sanger Unified School District BP 5141.52(a)

The Port Washington-Saukville School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Director of Special Services, Port Washington-Saukville School District, 100 W. Monroe Street, Port Washington, WI 53074 - Duane.Woelfel@pwssd.k12.wi.us