

Fresno Unified Board Policy (BP) 5141.52

Suicide Prevention

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 governing board which serves pupils in grades 7 to 12, inclusive, shall, before the beginning of the 2017–18 school year, adopt, at a regularly scheduled meeting, a policy on pupil suicide prevention in grades 7 to 12, inclusive. The policy shall be developed in consultation with school and community stakeholders, such as administrators, other staff, parents/guardians, and students; school-employed mental health professionals, such as school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and school nurses; and suicide prevention experts such as local health agencies, mental health professionals, community organizations and law enforcement; and shall, at a minimum, address procedures relating to suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention. (Education Code Section 215(a)(1))

The district’s policy on pupil suicide prevention in grades 7-12, inclusive, shall be readily accessible in a prominent location on the district’s existing internet website in a manner that is easily accessible to parents/guardians and pupils. (Education Code Section 234.6(b)(1))

The governing board which serves pupils in kindergarten and grades 1 to 6, inclusive, shall, before the beginning of the 2020-21 school year, adopt, at a regularly scheduled meeting, a policy on pupil suicide prevention in kindergarten and grades 1 to 6 inclusive. The policy shall be developed in consultation with school and community stakeholders, such as administrators, other staff, parents/guardians, and students; the county mental health plan, school-employed mental health professional, such as school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and school nurses; and suicide prevention experts such as local health agencies, mental health professionals, community organizations and law enforcement; and shall, at a minimum, address procedures for related to suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention. (Education Code Section 215(a)(2)(A))

(a) The policy for pupils in kindergarten and grades 1 to 6, inclusive, shall be written to ensure proper coordination and consultation with the county mental health plan if a referral is made for mental health or related services on behalf of a pupil who is a Medi-Cal beneficiary. (Education Code Section 215(a)(2)(C))

The district’s policy on pupil suicide prevention in kindergarten and grades 1 to 6, inclusive, shall be readily accessible in a prominent location on the district’s existing internet website in a manner that is easily accessible to parents/guardians and pupils and include a reference to the age appropriateness of the policy (Education Code Section 234.6(b)(2))

The policy shall also address any training to be provided to teachers of pupils in all of the grades served by the district:

(b) Materials approved by the district for training shall include how to identify appropriate mental health services, both at the school site and within the larger community, and when and how to refer youth and their families to those services.

(c) Materials approved for training may also include programs that can be completed through self-review of suitable suicide prevention materials.

(cf. 1220 - Citizen Advisory Committees)

(cf. 1400 - Relations Between Other Governmental Agencies and the Schools)

The Board shall ensure that measures and strategies for students in grades K-6 are age appropriate and delivered and discussed in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of young students. (Education Code 215)

Measures and strategies for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention shall include, but are not limited to:

1. Staff development on suicide awareness and prevention for teachers, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, site administrators, and other district employees who interact with students, as described in the accompanying administrative regulation.

(cf. 4131 – Staff Development)
(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)
(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)

2. Instruction to students in problem-solving and coping skills to promote students' mental, emotional, and social health and well-being, as well as instruction in recognizing and appropriately responding to warning signs 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. 5137 - Positive School Climate)
(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, the district's suicide prevention curriculum, 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)

If a referral is made for mental health or related services for a student in grade K-6 who is a Medi-Cal beneficiary, the Superintendent or designee shall coordinate and consult with the county mental health plan. (Education Code 215)

(cf. 5141.6 - School Health Services)

District employees shall act only within the authorization and scope of their credential or license. Nothing in this policy shall be construed as authorizing or encouraging district employees to diagnose or treat mental

illness unless they are specifically licensed and employed to do so. (Education Code 215)

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

The Superintendent or designee shall post this policy on the district's web site, in a prominent location and in a manner that is easily accessible to parents/guardians and students. (Education Code 234.6)

Fresno Unified School District prohibits discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment), intimidation, and bullying based on actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, national origin, immigration status, ancestry, age (40 and above), religious creed, religion, political belief or affiliation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, mental or physical disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy or parental status, childbirth, breastfeeding/lactation status, medical condition, military and veteran status, or association with a person or a group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics or any other basis protected by law or regulation, in its educational program(s) or employment.

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

234.6 Posting suicide prevention policy on web site

32280-32289.5 Comprehensive safety plan

49060-49079 Student records

49602 Confidentiality of student information

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

5850-5886 Children's 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, 2019 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

National Strategy for Suicide Prevention: Goals and Objectives for Action, rev. 2012 Preventing

Suicide: A Toolkit for High Schools, 2012

WEB SITES

American Association of Suicidology: <http://www.suicidology.org> American

Foundation for Suicide Prevention: <http://afsp.org>

American Psychological Association: <http://www.apa.org>

American School Counselor Association: <http://www.schoolcounselor.org>

California Department of Education, Mental Health: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/cg/mh>

California Department of Health Care Services, Suicide Prevention Program: <http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/MH/Pages/SuicidePrevention.aspx>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Mental Health: <http://www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth>

National Association of School Psychologists: <http://www.nasponline.org>

National Institute for Mental Health: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov>

Trevor Project: <http://thetrevorproject.org>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: <http://www.samhsa.gov>

Policy FRESNO UNIFIED SCHOOLDISTRICT

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Policy Section: 5000 Students