



SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY		
Approved by: Board of Directors	Adopted: 11/7/17 Revised: 8/9/2018	Number: 6013

Introduction

California *Education Code (EC)* Section 215, as added by Assembly Bill 2246, (Chapter 642, Statutes of 2016) mandates that the Governing Board of any local educational agency (LEA) that serves pupils in grades seven to twelve, inclusive, adopt a policy on pupil suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention. The policy shall specifically address the needs of high-risk groups, including suicide awareness and prevention training for teachers, and ensure that a school employee acts within the authorization and scope of the employee’s credential or license.

Overall Strategic Plan for Suicide Prevention

The Executive Director/Superintendent or Assistant Director may involve school-employed mental health, administrators, other school staff members, parents/guardians/caregivers, students, local health agencies and professionals, law enforcement, and community organizations in planning, implementing, and evaluating the district’s strategies for suicide prevention and intervention

The Assistant Director shall serve as the suicide prevention point of contact for the district. In addition, site leaders at each site shall serve as the liaison to the district’s suicide prevention point of contact. This policy shall be reviewed and revised as indicated, at least annually in conjunction with the previously mentioned community stakeholders.

Prevention

A. Suicide Prevention Training and Education

At least annually, all staff shall receive training on the risk factors and warning signs of suicide, suicide prevention, intervention, referral, and postvention, including information about certain groups of students who may be at elevated risk for suicide, including, but not limited to:

- Youth affected by suicide;
- Youth with a history of suicide ideation or attempts
- Youth with disabilities, mental illness, or substance abuse disorders
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth
- Youth experiencing homelessness or in out-of-home settings, such as foster care
- Youth who have suffered traumatic experiences

In addition to initial/annual orientations to the core components of suicide prevention, ongoing annual staff professional development for all staff may include more advanced suicide awareness and prevention training, such as SafeTalk training or ASIST training.

B. Employee Qualifications and Scope of Services

Employees of Long Valley Charter School and their partners must act only within the authorization and scope of their credential or license. School professionals are trained to identify suicide risk factors and warning signs, and to prevent the immediate risk of a suicidal behavior; however, treatment of suicidal ideation is typically beyond the scope of services offered in the school setting. Long Valley Charter School will refer students to appropriate mental health services in the community for treatment beyond what the school is able to provide.

C. Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers Participation and Education

- This suicide prevention policy shall be posted on Long Valley Charter School Web page(s).
- Parents/guardians/caregivers may be invited to provide input on the development, implementation, and annual updates of this policy.

D. Student Participation and Education

Following consultation with county and community mental health agencies, including those contracted by Long Valley Charter School to provide basic counseling services, students shall:

- Receive developmentally appropriate, student-centered education about the warning signs of mental health challenges and emotional distress;
- Receive developmentally appropriate guidance regarding the school's suicide prevention, intervention, and referral procedures.

Intervention, Assessment, Referral

A. Staff

The Assistant Director or a designee will receive advanced training in suicide intervention, such as ASIST training, and will be the primary suicide prevention liaison.

- Whenever a staff member suspects or has knowledge of a student's suicidal intentions, they shall promptly notify the primary suicide prevention liaison and the lead teacher or principal. If the student is in imminent danger, a call shall be made to 911.
- The principal, lead teacher, or another school administrator shall then notify, if appropriate and in the best interest of the student, the student's parents/guardians/caregivers as soon as possible and shall refer the student to mental health resources in the school or community.
- Students experiencing suicidal ideation shall not be left unsupervised. These students will be referred for further support by the following process:
 - a. Do not leave the student alone.
 - b. Notify the site leader, designee, or other staff, such as school-contracted mental health professionals, as required by the circumstances or the situation.
 - c. The site leader or designee will notify the parent/guardian/caregiver.
 - d. The student will be released only to the parent/guardian/caregiver, or emergency personnel if the parent/guardian/caregiver is not available and in the professional opinion of staff, the student might reasonably be expected to self-harm. In this case, staff will continue to attempt to contact parent.
 - e. A referral to school-based counseling will be made, and the parent/guardian/caregiver will also be referred to community mental health services which may be available.

B. Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers

Information about the referral process for receiving school-based counseling, as well as available community mental health services will be made available to parents.

C. Students

Students shall be encouraged to notify a staff member when they are experiencing emotional distress or suicidal ideation, or when they suspect or have knowledge of another student's emotional distress, suicidal ideation, or attempt. Staff receiving such information will notify the primary suicide prevention liaison and/or the site leader, and a referral will be made for school-based counseling and/or community based mental health services.

D. Action Plan for In-School Suicide Attempts

If a suicide attempt is made during the school day on campus, it is important to remember that the health and safety of the student and those around him/her is critical. School staff will follow these guidelines:

- Remain calm: remember the student is overwhelmed, confused, and emotionally distressed.
- Move all other students out of the immediate area. If you are the only staff present, get additional staff assistance.
- Contact the administrator or suicide prevention liaison as soon as safely possible.
- Call 911 and give them as much information about any suicide note, medications taken, and access to weapons, if applicable.
- If needed, provide medical first aid until a medical professional is available.
- Contact parents/guardians/caregivers as soon as possible.
- Do not send the student away or leave them alone, even if they need to go to the restroom.
- Promise privacy and help, and be respectful, but do not promise confidentiality.
- Student should only be released to parents/guardians/caregivers or to emergency personnel.

E. Action Plan for Out-of-School Suicide Attempts

If a suicide attempt by a student is outside of school property, Long Valley Charter School staff will follow these guidelines:

- Protect the privacy of the student by discouraging gossip.
- An administrator or designee (such as the student's teacher) will contact the parents/guardians/caregivers and offer support to the family.
- Discuss with the family how they would like the school to respond to the attempt.
- Obtain permission from the parents/guardians/caregivers to share information to ensure the facts regarding the crisis are correctly disseminated.
- Provide care and determine appropriate support to affected students.
- Offer to the student and parents/guardians/caregivers steps for re-integration to school.

F. Re-Entry to School After a Suicide Attempt

Staff will follow these guidelines upon a student's return to school:

- The site leader will confer with student and parents/guardians/caregivers about any specific requests on how to handle the situation; if possible, obtain a written release of information signed by parents/guardians/caregivers.

- Allow accommodations for student to make up work (be understanding that missed assignments may add stress to student);
- Mental health professionals or trusted staff members should maintain ongoing contact to monitor student's actions and mood;
- Refer the student for community-based and/or school-based counseling.

G. Responding After a Suicide Death (Postvention)

Following a death by suicide, the district leadership team will serve as the postvention response team and will meet as soon as is possible under the circumstances to discuss continued and further action. School staff will follow these guidelines, which constitute the Suicide Postvention Response Plan:

- The school site leader, primary suicide prevention liaison, or Executive Director will confirm the death and cause.
- An appropriate staff member will be designated to contact deceased's family (within 24 hours) to express condolences and offer support.
- Notify all staff members (ideally in-person or via phone, not via e-mail or mass notification).
 - If possible, conduct an all-staff meeting.
 - Remind staff of the availability of emotional support resources.
 - Administration will provide guidance to staff as to how to handle notification to students about the death and the availability of support services.
 - Administration will provide only information that is relevant, and that Long Valley Charter School has permission to disclose.
- Identify students significantly affected by suicide death and other students at risk of imitative behavior.
- Identify students affected by suicide death but not at risk of imitative behavior.
- The Postvention Response team will discuss and respond to memorial requests and will utilize and respond to social media outlets.
- Consider important dates (i.e., anniversary of death, deceased birthday, graduation, or other significant event) and how these will be addressed.
 - Support siblings, close friends, teachers, and/or students of deceased.