

**EL DORADO UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD POLICY**

Students

**SUICIDE PREVENTION
AR 5141.52**

Suicide prevention training shall be provided to teachers, counselors, and other district employees as deemed necessary who interact with students at the secondary level.

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)

Materials for training shall include how to identify appropriate mental health services at the school site and within the community, and when and how to refer youth and their families to those services. Materials ~~also~~ may include programs that can be completed through self-review of suitable suicide prevention materials. *(Education Code 215)*

Staff development shall include research and information related to the following topics:

1. The higher risk of suicide among certain groups, 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
2. Individual risk factors such as previous suicide attempt(s) or self-harm, history of depression or mental illness, family history of suicide or violence, feelings of isolation, interpersonal conflicts, a recent severe stressor or loss, family instability, impulsivity, and other factors

(cf. 5131.6 - Alcohol and Other Drugs)

3. Warning signs that may indicate depression, emotional distress, or suicidal intentions, such as changes in students' personality or behavior and verbalizations of hopelessness or suicidal intent
4. Protective factors that may help to decrease a person's suicide risk, such as resiliency, problem-solving ability, access to mental health care, and positive connections to family, peers, school, and community
5. Instructional strategies for teaching suicide prevention and promoting mental and emotional health
6. School and community resources and services, including resources and services that meet the specific needs of high-risk groups

(cf. 5141.6 - School Health Services)

(cf. 6164.2 - Guidance/Counseling Services)

7. Intervention strategies when a student attempts, threatens, or discloses the desire to die by suicide

INSTRUCTION

The district's comprehensive health education program shall promote the healthy mental, emotional, and social development of students and shall be aligned with the state content standards and curriculum framework. Suicide prevention instruction shall be incorporated into the health education curriculum at appropriate secondary grades.

(cf. 1020 - Youth Services)

(cf. 5131.6 - Alcohol and Other Drugs)

(cf. 5141.6 - School Health Services)

(cf. 6142.8 - Comprehensive Health Education)

(cf. 6164.2 - Guidance/Counseling Services)

INTERVENTION

Students shall be encouraged to notify a teacher, principal, counselor, or other adult when they are experiencing thoughts of suicide or when they suspect or have knowledge of another student's suicidal intentions.

Every statement regarding suicidal intent shall be taken seriously. Whenever a staff member suspects or has knowledge of a student's suicidal intentions based on the student's verbalizations or act of self-harm, he/she shall promptly notify the principal or school counselor.

Although any personal information that a student discloses to a school counselor shall generally not be revealed, released, referenced, or discussed with third parties, the counselor may report to the principal or student's parents/guardians when he/she has reasonable cause to believe that disclosure is necessary to avert a clear and present danger to the health, safety, or welfare of the student. In addition, the counselor may disclose information of a personal nature to psychotherapists, other health care providers, or the school nurse for the sole purpose of referring the student for treatment. *(Education Code 49602)*

(cf. 5141 - Health Care and Emergencies)

A school employee shall act only within the authorization and scope of his/her credential or license. An employee is not authorized to diagnose or treat mental illness unless he/she is specifically licensed and employed to do so. *(Education Code 215)*

Whenever schools establish a peer counseling system to provide support for students, peer counselors shall receive training that includes identification of the warning signs of suicidal behavior and referral of a suicidal student to appropriate adults.

(cf. 5138 - Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation)

When a suicide attempt or threat is reported, the principal or designee shall ensure student safety by taking the following actions:

1. Provide available school based counseling and nursing services and if necessary call for emergency response
2. Notifying law enforcement and/or other emergency assistance as necessary
3. Keeping 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. Removing other students from the immediate area as soon as possible

(cf. 0450 - Comprehensive Safety Plan)
(cf. 5141 - Health Care and Emergencies)

The principal or designee shall document the incident in writing, including the steps that the school took in response to the suicide attempt or threat.

(cf. 5125 - Student Records)

The Superintendent or designee shall follow up with the parent/guardian and student in a timely manner to provide referrals to appropriate services as needed. If the parent/guardian does not access treatment for the student, the Superintendent or designee may meet with the parent/guardian to identify barriers to treatment and assist the family in providing follow-up care for the student. If follow-up care is still not provided, the Superintendent or designee shall consider whether he/she is required, pursuant to laws for mandated reporters of child neglect, to refer the matter to the local child protective services agency.

(cf. 5141.4 - Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting)

For any student returning to school after a mental health crisis, the principal or designee and/or school counselor may meet with the parents/guardians and, if appropriate, with the student to discuss re-entry and appropriate next steps to ensure the student's readiness for return to school.

POSTVENTION

In the event that a student dies by suicide, the Superintendent or designee shall communicate with the student's parents/guardians to offer condolences, assistance, and resources. In accordance with the laws governing confidentiality of student record information, the Superintendent or designee may consult with the parents/guardians regarding facts that may be divulged to other students, parents/guardians, and staff.

The Superintendent or designee shall implement procedures to address students' and staff's grief and to minimize the risk of imitative suicide or suicide contagion. He/she shall provide students, parents/guardians, and staff with information, counseling, and/or referrals to community agencies as needed. School administration may receive assistance from school counselors, school

psychologists, and/or nurses in determining how best to discuss the suicide or attempted suicide with students.

Any response to media inquiries shall be handled by the district-designated spokesperson who shall not divulge confidential information. The district's response shall not sensationalize suicide and shall focus on the district's postvention plan and available resources.

(cf. 1112- Media Relations)

After any suicide or attempted suicide by a student, the Superintendent or designee may provide an opportunity for designated staff who responded to the incident to debrief and make recommendations for future actions.