

Policy

BOARD OF EDUCATION
HORTONVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

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SUICIDE PREVENTION, INTERVENTION, AND POSTVENTION FOR DEATH BY SUICIDE

The Board recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among youth and must be taken seriously. In order to attempt to reduce suicidal behavior and its impact on students and families, the District shall develop prevention, intervention, and postvention strategies and procedures.

The District may involve school health professionals, school counselors, administrators, other staff, parents/guardians, students, local health agencies and professionals, and community organizations in planning, implementing, and evaluating the district's strategies for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention.

The District may offer parents education or information which describes the severity of the youth suicide problem, the district's suicide prevention curriculum, risk factors and warning signs of suicide, basic steps for helping suicidal youth, and/or school and community resources that can help youth in crisis.

Prevention and Instruction

Using the Department of Public Instruction notice, the District shall annually inform the professional staff of the resources available from the Department and other resources regarding suicide prevention. The District shall also implement procedures to obtain payment or reimbursement for professional mental health services provided by any licensed treatment professional.

Suicide prevention strategies may include, but not be limited to, 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.

Developmentally appropriate, student-centered SEL education materials will be integrated into the curriculum of all K-12 grade levels. The content of these materials will:

- A. encourage positive social and emotional development.
- B. teach life skills such as problem-solving and sound decision-making.
- C. provide knowledge of the relationship between youth suicide and the use of alcohol and controlled substances.
- D. promote awareness of the warning signs of suicide, how to respond to potential suicidal persons and available community counseling and mental services.
- E. stress the importance of safe and healthy choices and coping strategies.
- F. instruct how to recognize risk factors and warning signs of mental disorders and suicide in oneself and others.
- G. facilitate help-seeking strategies for oneself or others, including how to engage school resources and refer friends for help. In addition, schools may provide supplemental small group suicide prevention programming for students.

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Staff Development

Suicide prevention training for staff shall be designed to help staff identify and respond to students at risk of suicide. The training shall be offered under the direction of the District Pupil Services Staff in cooperation with one or more community mental health agencies and must include information on:

- A. the role of protective factors with an emphasis on school climate, connectedness, caring staff, and positive student relationships, and building support for these protective factors within staff and community as a positive purpose of suicide prevention.
- B. research 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.
- C. warning signs that may indicate suicidal intentions include changes in students' appearance, personality, or behavior. Warning signs of this nature should receive particular attention when displayed by an individual in one or more of the following groups:
 1. Youth bereaved by suicide
 2. Youth with disabilities, mental illness, or substance abuse
 3. Homeless youth
 4. LGBTQ youth
 5. Youth in the juvenile justice or welfare system
 6. Native American youth
 7. Youth on the fringes of mainstream social groups
- D. school and community resources and services.
- E. District procedures for intervening when a student attempts, threatens, or discloses the desire to die by suicide.

Training will be provided annually for all teachers and staff.

Suicide Intervention; Civil Liability Exemption

Any School District officer, employee, or volunteer who in good faith attempts to prevent suicide by a student is immune from civil liability for their acts or omissions in respect to the suicide or attempted suicide.

Postvention

The Board recognizes that the death of a staff member or student, whether by suicide or other means, that affects the entire school and community. In the event of a staff member or student's death, it is critical that the school's response be swift, consistent, and intended to protect the student body and community. The TECIP process will be used.

Legal References:

115.365, Wis. Stats. (Assistance for Schools for Suicide Prevention Programs)

118.01(2)(d)7, Wis. Stats. (Educational Goals and Expectations)

118.295, Wis. Stats. (Suicide Intervention, Civil Liability Exemption)

895.48(1), Wis. Stats. (Liability Exemption)

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