

Policy 5141.52: Suicide Prevention

Status: ADOPTED

Original Adopted Date: 07/01/2009 | Last Revised Date: 06/01/2021 | Last Reviewed Date: 06/01/2021

CSBA NOTE: Education Code 215 mandates that the Governing Board of any district serving students in grades K-12 adopt a policy on student suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention (i.e., intervention conducted after a suicide) with specified components. The required components are addressed in the following policy and the accompanying administrative regulation.

The following policy is consistent with the California Department of Education's (CDE) Model Youth Suicide Prevention Policy, which also includes an extensive list of resources to assist in the prevention, intervention, and postvention of student suicide. Districts are encouraged to work closely with their county behavioral health department to identify and access resources at the local level.

The Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission developed a suicide prevention plan for the state which is published in *Striving for Zero: California's Strategic Plan for Suicide Prevention 2020-2025*, available on its web site. The plan presents strategic aims, with related goals, objectives, and an implementation schedule. Districts may find the strategic plan useful in learning more about the stigma associated with behavioral health needs, myths and misconceptions about suicidal behavior and its hinderance to prevention efforts, suicidal behavior, risk and protective factors, and best practices in suicide prevention.

The following policy and accompanying administrative regulation should be revised to reflect district practice and the grade levels offered by the district.

The Governing Board recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among youth, prevention is a collective effort that requires stakeholder engagement, and 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, its impact on students and families, and other trauma associated with suicide, the Superintendent or designee shall develop measures, strategies, practices, and supports for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention.

In developing policy and procedures for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention, the Superintendent or designee shall consult with school and community stakeholders, school-employed mental health professionals, suicide prevention experts, and, in developing policy for grades K-6, the county mental health plan. (Education Code 215)

CSBA NOTE: The following optional paragraph may be revised to reflect district practice. Education Code 215 does not define "school and community stakeholders" or "school-employed mental health professionals" who must be consulted in the development of policy. The following examples are consistent with CSBA and CDE recommendations.

School and community stakeholders and school mental health professionals with whom the Superintendent or designee shall consult may include district and school administrators, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, school nurses, other staff, parents/guardians and caregivers, students, local health agencies, mental health professionals, community organizations, law enforcement, legal counsel, and/or the district's risk manager or insurance carrier. The Superintendent or designee may also collaborate with county and/or city governments in an effort to align district policy with any existing community suicide prevention plans.

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

CSBA NOTE: Education Code 215 mandates that the district's policy address any training on suicide awareness and prevention to be provided to teachers of students in all grade levels served by the district. See the accompanying administrative regulation for additional language fulfilling this mandate. In addition, Education Code 49604 encourages each district to provide suicide prevention training at least once to each middle, junior high, and high school counselor. Item #1 should be revised to specify the categories of employees who will receive the training.

1. Staff development on suicide awareness and prevention for teachers, interns, school counselors, and others who interact with students, including, as appropriate, substitute teachers, coaches, expanded day learning staff, crossing guards, tutors, and volunteers

CSBA NOTE: Items #2-9 below reflect optional strategies for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention and may be revised to reflect district practice.

2. Instruction to students in problem-solving, coping, and resiliency 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

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
4. The review of materials and resources used in awareness efforts and communications to ensure they align with best practices for safe and effective messaging about suicide
5. The provision of information to parents/guardians and caregivers regarding risk and protective factors, warning signs of suicide, the severity of the suicide problem among youth, the district's suicide prevention curriculum, the district's suicide prevention policy and procedures, basic steps for helping suicidal youth, the importance of communicating with appropriate staff if suicide risk is present or suspected, access to suicide prevention training, and/or school and community resources that can help youth in crisis
6. 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
7. Crisis intervention procedures for addressing suicide threats or attempts
8. Counseling and other postvention strategies for helping students, staff, and others cope in the aftermath of a student's suicide

CSBA NOTE: The National Association of School Psychologists recommends that the district and/or school sites create a suicide prevention crisis team to assist in effectively identifying and intervening with students who are at risk of suicidal behavior, including adoption and implementation of policies and procedures. It is recommended that such teams include, at a minimum, administration, mental health staff, and school security personnel. The same crisis intervention team may be established to address broader mental health concerns as described in BP 5141.5 - Mental Health.

9. Establishment of district and/or school-site crisis intervention team(s) to ensure the proper implementation and review of this policy and other district practices related to the emotional and behavioral wellness of students, including, but not limited to, the oversight of mental health and suicide prevention training, collaboration with community mental health organizations, identification of resources and organizations that provide evidence-based treatment, collaboration to build community response, and compliance with Education Code 215

CSBA NOTE: Education Code 215 mandates that the district's policy specifically address the needs of high-risk groups, including, but not limited to, those listed in the following paragraph. See the accompanying administrative regulation for additional language fulfilling this mandate.

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. (Education Code 215)

CSBA NOTE: The following two paragraphs are for use by districts that serve students in grades K-6.

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)

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)

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)

CSBA NOTE: Education Code 215 requires that the district's student suicide prevention policy be updated at least every five years. Given the severity of the issue and importance of maintaining an up-to-date suicide prevention policy, CSBA and CDE recommend reviewing and updating this policy annually. The following paragraph may be revised to reflect district practice.

The Board shall review, and update as necessary, this policy at least every five years. The Board may, at its discretion, review the policy more frequently. (Education Code 215)

Mesa Union School District

Somis, Ca

Board Approved: September 21, 2021

The Superintendent or designee shall periodically review district data pertaining to school climate and reports of suicidal ideation, attempts, or death to identify patterns or trends and make recommendations regarding program development.

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)

Policy Reference Disclaimer: These references are not intended to be part of the policy itself, nor do they indicate the basis or authority for the board to enact this policy. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.

State References

	Description
Ed. Code 215	Student suicide prevention policies
Ed. Code 215.5	Student identification cards, inclusion of safety hotlines
Ed. Code 216	Suicide prevention online training programs
Ed. Code 234.6	Bullying and harassment prevention information
Ed. Code 32280-32289.5	Comprehensive safety plan
Ed. Code 49060-49079	Student records
Ed. Code 49602	Confidentiality of personal information received during counseling
Ed. Code 49604	Suicide prevention training for school counselors
Gov. Code 810-996.6	California Tort Claims Act
Pen. Code 11164-11174.3	Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act
W&I Code 5698	Emotionally disturbed youth; legislative intent
W&I Code 5850-5886	Children's Mental Health Services Act

Management Resources References

	Description
California Department of Education Publication	01-05 Guidelines for Piloting Textbooks and Instructional Materials, rev. January 2015
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Publica	School Connectedness: Strategies for Increasing Protective Factors Among Youth, 2009
Court Decision	A.M. v. Albertsons, LLC, (2009) Cal.App.4th 455
Nat'l Assoc. of School Psychologists Publication	Preventing Suicide: Guidelines for Administrators and Crisis Teams, 2015
U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services Publication	National Strategy for Suicide Prevention: Goals and Objectives for Action, rev. 2012
Website	AASA The School Superintendents Association - https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/MOaF8AO8cslshSlfGc13QQoEQ==

Cross References

	Description
0450	Comprehensive Safety Plan - https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/r4vTslshoYLvUjplusGaGRffa0mA==
0450	Comprehensive Safety Plan - https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/H5ZxOaslshHOeexslshGjrvQ4J5Q==
0470	COVID-19 Mitigation Plan - https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/gx6z1OE0WF1n2Des17d7IA==
1400	Relations Between Other Governmental Agencies And The Schools - https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/2slshOddASNpRgaSFRbxqwJpQ==
3515	Campus Security - https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/f6i6slshR6cGolXslshmoldU69iw==

- 3515 Campus Security - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/WKgcAiEXXQzkZR3wljM36Q==>
- 4131 Staff Development - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/mpluSfJtQCJn0ArH43NKz32QQ==>
- 4231 Staff Development - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/YX9IZdvUEZNtp9AuLVbcSw==>
- 5125 Student Records - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/ZvxF6XkQA2GslshUjbmSlshh0H0Q==>
- 5125 Student Records - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/3pluSp31Lkmh0LChplusQ18aDY6w==>
- 5131 Conduct - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/rcn2VGELy8pB5ycAAiZE9w==>
- 5131.2 Bullying - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/tDboCIN0vOslshQiptfXslshzJmA==>
- 5131.2 Bullying - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/f2cYyaJzLvsVMMt1BZQC0Q==>
- 5131.6 Alcohol And Other Drugs - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/xzpluSi2SplusKSeQu0AFVCplusJC5g==>
- 5131.6 Alcohol And Other Drugs - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/ehwaVjHFsKfboxMDjfETjQ==>
- 5131.8 Mobile Communication Devices - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/LiV8VhZLai3nuA7Sw2q4HA==>
- 5137 Positive School Climate - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/jRjgpluSopnUd0uMgyHO1dvGw==>
- 5138 Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/zrtUWyLBw90n4vZ5zSlsh5Rg==>
- 5141 Health Care And Emergencies - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/jBuNCsiUisIsh2HEvakQPHvA==>
- 5141 Health Care And Emergencies - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/3kRQYo1qgPRDQdnVRVeBlw==>
- 5141.4 Child Abuse Prevention And Reporting - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/mbhDplus33qDpDhH8NEBE0tuQ==>
- 5141.4 Child Abuse Prevention And Reporting - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/PljXxKxxslshCWjhjgkkQjUg==>
- 5141.6 School Health Services - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/mpMwocGFcF5WmFMN2Mddew==>
- 5141.6 School Health Services - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/eslshfkwtocdMUhlybzzvzvgg==>
- 5142 Safety - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/5slshapUAxOA1sFMKxHhrA7ag==>
- 5142 Safety - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/dz5K1iBya2cVusclfedvSg==>
- 5145.3 Nondiscrimination/Harassment - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/3RLPKjNPsN7ZGURJ4LNGYw==>
- 5145.3 Nondiscrimination/Harassment - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/CUCON6Qd8nkjOdljoQgkAQ==>
- 5145.7 Sexual Harassment - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/E7h3EO9DD8llqYN6cMgv4Q==>
- 5145.7 Sexual Harassment - <https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/T5Lzfk3slshqNsWLeXOOYuFrQ==>

- 5145.9 Hate-Motivated Behavior -
<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/GMbDh5yDVyMtcEirOa4j9A==>
- 6142.8 Comprehensive Health Education -
<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/Fxzfr7ncsUmy1Bp3FM3KA==>
- 6142.8 Comprehensive Health Education -
<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/MI295bVYUYZO2gOy5KViWQ==>
- 6164.2 Guidance/Counseling Services -
<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/PbMOojolGWaiCvxEeZkuDQ==>