

5350 STUDENT SUICIDE PREVENTION

The Board of Education recognizes that depression and self-destruction are problems of increasing severity among children and adolescents. A student under severe stress cannot benefit fully from the educational program and may pose a threat to himself or herself or others.

The Board directs all school personnel to be alert to the student who exhibits behavioral warning signs of potential self-destruction or who threatens or attempts suicide. Any such signs or the report of such signs from another student or staff member should be taken with the utmost seriousness and reported immediately to the Building Principal/and Superintendent who shall notify the student's parent and other professional staff members in accordance with administrative regulations.

A potentially suicidal student shall be referred to the Child Study Team for appropriate evaluation and/or recommendation for independent medical or psychiatric services. In the event that the parent objects to the recommended evaluation or indicates an unwillingness to cooperate in the best interests of the student, the Child Study Team may contact the Department of Children and Families, Division of Child Protection and Permanency to request that agency's intervention on the student's behalf.

The Superintendent shall, in consultation with appropriate teaching staff members and mental health organizations, develop and implement a stress reduction program for students in grades PreK through 8 to address the problem of depression, help students toward alternative ways of resolving stressful situations, and encourage students to help one another.

In accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:6-111 and 18A:6-112, as part of the required professional development for teachers as outlined in N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-3 et seq., every teaching staff member must complete at least two hours of instruction in suicide prevention, to be provided by a licensed health care professional with experience in mental health issues, in each professional development period. The instruction in suicide prevention shall include information on the relationship between the risk of suicide and incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying and information on reducing the risk of suicide in students who are members of communities identified as having members at high risk of suicide.

The Superintendent shall prepare and disseminate regulations for the guidance of staff members in recognizing the student who contemplates suicide, in responding to threatened or attempted suicide, and in preventing contagion when a student commits suicide.

N.J.S.A. 18A:6-111; 18A:6-112

N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-3 et seq.

Adopted: November 2016

