

5141.52 BP: Student Records

Status: ADOPTED

Original Adopted Date: 10/9/2014 | Last Revised Date: 8/14/2025

The County Board of Education 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 County Board shall incorporate any measures, strategies, practices, and supports developed by the County Superintendent of Schools for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention in county office of education (COE) schools.

Developing and updating policies and procedures for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention shall include consultation with school and community stakeholders, school-employed mental health professionals, suicide prevention experts, and, for the policy for students in grades K-6, coordination with the county mental health plan. (Education Code 215)

Consultation with school and community stakeholders may include COE 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, and/or the COE's risk manager or insurance carrier. Collaboration may also occur with county behavioral health in an effort to align COE policy with any existing county, city, and/or statewide suicide prevention plans.

When developing or reviewing COE policy on suicide prevention, consideration may be made regarding the need to hire a mental health professional for the COE, or for any school that is not currently served by a mental health professional, and the possible funding source(s) for such hiring.

COE measures and strategies for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention, as prepared by the County Superintendent, may include, but are not limited to:

1. Staff development on suicide awareness and prevention offered by the County Superintendent or designee for teachers, interns, school counselors, and others who interact with students, including, as appropriate, substitute teachers, expanded day learning staff, tutors, and volunteers
2. Age and developmentally appropriate instruction in problem-solving, coping skills, and resiliency to promote students' mental, emotional, and social health and well-being; help-seeking strategies and resources; and recognition of and appropriate response 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 COE's suicide prevention curriculum, the COE'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 which include, but are not limited to, the following actions:
 - a. Immediately securing medical treatment and/or mental health services as necessary
 - b. Notifying law enforcement and/or other emergency assistance if a suicidal act is being actively threatened
 - c. Keeping the student under continuous adult supervision and providing comfort to the student until the parent/guardian and/or appropriate support agent or agency can be contacted and has the opportunity to intervene
 - d. Removing other students from the immediate area as soon as possible
8. Counseling and other postvention strategies for helping students, staff, and others cope in the aftermath of a student's suicide
9. Establishment by the County Superintendent or designee of COE school-site crisis intervention team(s) to ensure the proper implementation and review of this policy and other local practices related to the emotional and behavioral wellness of students, including, but not limited to, the oversight of mental health and suicide prevention training, ensuring the suicide prevention policy, protocols, and resources are posted on the COE and school websites, 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

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)

As appropriate, trauma-informed crisis management procedures may be developed to address student mental health disabilities. In accordance with law, such procedures may include an individualized assessment of a student's circumstances; provide and facilitate access to mental health evaluations and services; reasonably modify policies, such as attendance policies, for individual students; and train staff to recognize and respond appropriately to signs of distress and suicidal ideation in students.

The measures and strategies may also address the needs of students with 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 or traumatic stressor or loss, family instability, impulsivity, and other factors.

As may be determined by the County Superintendent or designee, processes may be established for maintaining regular contact between school staff and students, including during school closures.

Measures and strategies for students in grades K-6 shall be age appropriate and delivered and discussed in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of young students. (Education Code 215)

Student identification cards for students in grades 7-12, when issued by the County Superintendent or designee, shall include the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline and National Suicide Prevention Lifeline telephone number and may also include the Crisis Text Line, campus police or security, a local suicide prevention hotline telephone number, and/or a quick response (QR) code for the county's mental health resources website. (Education Code 215.5)

Students shall be encouraged to notify a teacher, principal, counselor, designated reporter, 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. It is the responsibility of the County Superintendent or designee to ensure that any staff member who suspects or has knowledge of a student's suicidal intentions based on the student's verbalizations or act of self-harm is encouraged to promptly notify the principal, school counselor, or designated reporter, who shall implement COE intervention protocols as appropriate.

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 COE shall coordinate and consult with the county mental health plan. (Education Code 215)

Mental or behavioral health services for students in need shall be provided in accordance with protocols established by the County Superintendent or designee.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed as authorizing or encouraging employees to act outside of the authorization or scope of their credential or to diagnose or treat mental illness unless specifically licensed and employed to do so. (Education Code 215)

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

COE data pertaining to school climate and reports of suicidal ideation, attempts, or death shall be periodically reviewed to identify patterns or trends and make recommendations regarding program development.

This policy shall be posted in a prominent location on the COE's website in a manner that is easily accessible to parents/guardian 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
Ed. Code 215

Description
Suicide prevention policies

Ed. Code 215.5	Student identification cards; inclusion of safety hotlines
Ed. Code 216	Suicide prevention online training programs
Ed. Code 218.3	Training curriculum to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, and questioning students
Ed. Code 234.6	Bullying and harassment prevention information
Ed. Code 49060-49079	Student records
Ed. Code 49428.15	Identification of evidence-based and evidence-informed training programs for schools to address youth behavioral health
Ed. Code 49428.2	Referral protocols for addressing student behavioral health concerns in grades 7-12
Ed. Code 49428.5	Student mental health poster
Ed. Code 49429	Telehealth technology in schools
Ed. Code 49602	Confidentiality of student information
Ed. Code 49604	Suicide prevention training for school counselors
Gov. Code 810-996.6	Government 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
Federal	Description
42 USC 290bb-33	Suicide Training and Awareness Nationally Delivered for Universal Prevention Act of 2021

Management Resources

California Department of Education Publication	Telehealth Guidance for School Districts, July 2024
California Department of Education Publication	Model Youth Suicide Prevention Policy for Local Educational Agencies that Serve Kindergarten through Twelfth Grade Students, February 2023
California Department of Education Publication	Health Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve, 2019
California Department of Education Publication	Health Education Content Standards for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve, 2008
CDC Publication	Promoting Mental Health and Well-Being in Schools, December 2023
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Pub.	School Connectedness: Strategies for Increasing Protective Factors Among Youth, 2009
Court Decision	Corales v. Bennett (Ontario-Montclair School District), (2009) 567 F.3d 554
CSBA Publication	Safe Schools Toolkit: Bullying and Cyberbullying, July 2024
Mental Health Svcs Oversight & Accountability Pub.	Accelerating Transformational Change: Strategic Plan for 2024-2027

Mental Health Svcs Oversight & Accountability Pub.	<u>Striving for Zero: California's Strategic Plan for Suicide Prevention 2020-2025</u>
Nat'l Assoc. of School Psychologists Publication	<u>Preventing Suicide: Guidelines for Administrators and Crisis Teams, 2015</u>
Nat's Assoc. of School Psychologists Publication	<u>Conducting a Virtual Suicide Assessment Checklist</u>
Nat's Assoc. of School Psychologists Publication	<u>Comprehensive School Suicide Prevention in a Time of Distance Learning, 2020</u>
U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services Publication	<u>Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for High Schools, 2012</u>
U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services Publication	<u>National Strategy for Suicide Prevention, 2024</u>
USDOE, Ofc for CR & USDOJ, CRT Pub.	<u>Supporting and Protecting the Rights of Students at Risk of Self-Harm in the Era of COVID-19, October 2021</u>
Website	<u>CalHOPE Schools Initiative</u>
Website	<u>SchoolSafety.gov</u>
Website	<u>California School Climate, Health, and Learning Surveys (Calschls)</u>
Website	<u>California Mental Health Services Authority</u>
Website	<u>Crisis Text Line</u>
Website	<u>Each Mind Matters: California's Mental Health Movement</u>
Website	<u>HEARD Alliance</u>
Website	<u>National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention</u>
Website	<u>Suicide Prevention Messaging</u>
Website	<u>Mental Health Evaluation, Training, Research, and Innovation Center for Schools (Metrics)</u>
Website	<u>California Surgeon General, Safe Spaces: Trauma-Informed Training</u>
Website	<u>California Department of Public Health, Office of Suicide Prevention</u>
Website	<u>CSBA District and County Office of Education Legal Services</u>
Website	<u>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration</u>
Website	<u>Trevor Project</u>
Website	<u>Suicide Prevention Resource Center</u>
Website	<u>Suicide Prevention Lifeline</u>
Website	<u>National Institute for Mental Health</u>
Website	<u>National Child Traumatic Stress Network</u>
Website	<u>National Association of School Psychologists</u>
Website	<u>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Mental Health</u>

Website	California Department of Health Care Services, Mental Health Services
Website	California Department of Education, Mental Health
Website	American School Counselor Association
Website	American Psychological Association
Website	American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
Website	American Association of Suicidology
Website	American Academy of Pediatrics

Cross References

Code	Description
1112	Media Relations
5131.2	Bullying
5131.2	Bullying
5145.3	Nondiscrimination/Harassment
5145.3	Nondiscrimination/Harassment
5145.7	Sex Discrimination and Sex-Based Harassment
5145.7-E(1)	Sex Discrimination and Sex-Based Harassment
5145.71-E(1)	Title IX Sex Discrimination and Sex-Based Harassment Complaint Procedures
5145.71-E(2)	Title IX Sex Discrimination and Sex-Based Harassment Complaint Procedures
5145.9	Hate-Motivated Behavior

Adopted:	October 9, 2014
Revised:	June 8, 2017
Revised:	August 8, 2019
Revised:	February 13, 2020
Revised:	August 14, 2025