

SUICIDE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

The Laconia School District committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its students and school community. This policy supports federal, state and local efforts to provide education on youth suicide awareness and prevention; to establish methods of prevention, intervention, and response to suicide or suicide attempt (“postvention”); and to promote access to suicide awareness, prevention and postvention resources.

- A. The Superintendent shall develop and provide to the Board for approval, a coordinated written District Suicide Prevention Plan (the “Plan”) to include guidelines, protocols and procedures with the objectives of prevention, risk assessment, intervention and response to youth suicides and suicide attempts.

Specific Requirements for Plan Terms: The District Suicide Prevention Plan shall include terms relating to:

1. Suicide prevention (risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, referral process);
2. Response to in-or-out-of-school student suicides or suicide attempts (postvention, suicide contagion);
3. Student education regarding safe and healthy choices, coping strategies, recognition of risk factors and warning signs of mental disorders and suicide; and help seeking strategies;
4. Training of staff, designated volunteers, and contracted personnel on the issues of youth suicide risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, response procedures, referral process, post-intervention and resources available within the school and community;
5. Considerations for confidentiality,
6. Designation of any personnel, in addition to the School Counselor, in each building to act as points of contact when students are believed to be at an elevated risk of suicide;
7. Information regarding state and community resources for referral, crisis intervention, and other related information;
8. Dissemination of the Plan or information about the Plan to students, parents, faculty, staff, and school volunteers;
9. Promotion of cooperative efforts between the District and its schools and community suicide prevention program personnel;
10. Other provisions deemed appropriate to meet the objectives of this Policy (e.g., student handbook language, reporting processes, “postvention” strategies, memorial parameters, etc.).

B. Crisis Team Coordinator and Members.

1. Crisis Response Team. Each building will have a Crisis Response Team, who, under the direction of the Superintendent shall be responsible for:
 - a) developing and maintaining cooperative relationships with and coordination efforts between the District and community suicide prevention programs and personnel;
 - b) annual updating, as needed, of (i) State and community crisis or intervention referral intervention information, and (ii) names and contact information of Crisis Team Members, for inclusion in student handbooks and on the District's website;
 - c) developing or assisting individual teachers with the development of age appropriate student educational programing, such that all students receive information in the importance of safe and healthy choices and coping strategies, recognizing risk factors and warning signs of mental disorders and suicide in oneself and others, and providing help-seeking strategies for oneself or others, including how to engage school resources and refer friends for help;
 - d) developing or assisting in the development of the annual staff training required under section C of this policy;
 - e) Such other duties as referenced in this Policy or as assigned by the Superintendent.
 2. Building Suicide Prevention Point of Contact: The School Counselor, or, in his/her absence, the building principal or designee, shall be designated as the Building Suicide Prevention Point of Contact, and shall serve as the in building point-of-contact person when a student is believed to be at an elevated risk for suicide. Employees who have reason to believe a student is at risk of suicide, or is exhibiting risk factors for suicide, shall report that information to the Building Point of Contact, who shall, immediately or as soon as possible, establish and implement a response plan with the Crisis Response Team.
- C. Annual Staff Training. The Superintendent shall assure that beginning with the 2020-21 school year, all school building faculty and staff, designated volunteers, and any other personnel who have regular contact with students, including contracted personnel or third-party employees, receive at least two hours of training in suicide awareness and prevention. Such training may include such matters as youth suicide risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, intervention, response procedures, referrals, and postvention and local resources.
- D. Dissemination. Student handbooks and the District's website will be updated each year with the contact information for the Building Crisis Response Teams, State and community crisis or intervention referral intervention resources. The District Suicide Prevention Plan will be made available on the District's, and each school's respective websites.

Adopted: April 21, 2020