

Model Student Suicide Prevention Policy

Updated April 2025

(DISTRICT NAME) is committed to protecting the health and well-being of all students and recognizes that physical and mental well-being are essential components of student success. Faculty and staff are expected to be proactive in fostering a safe and supportive learning environment and to immediately report any indications that a student may be at risk of self-harm or harming others. Students are strongly encouraged to report if they, or another student, are experiencing suicidal thoughts or require support. A summary of available resources shall be reviewed annually and prominently posted for students and families.

This policy aligns with [Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-1901](#) and [Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-1902](#), which require all local education agencies (LEAs) to adopt a suicide prevention policy and provide annual training for employees.

PREVENTION

All district employees shall participate in annual suicide prevention training, which may include in-service Times New Roman training or other equivalent programs approved by the director of schools. Training shall cover risk factors, warning signs, intervention and response procedures, referrals, and postvention strategies, as outlined in [Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-3004\(c\)](#).

The director of schools shall designate a district suicide prevention coordinator responsible for planning, coordinating, and monitoring the implementation of this policy. Each school principal shall appoint a school suicide prevention coordinator to act as a point of contact for suicide prevention matters and policy implementation at their school.

INTERVENTION

Any school employee who has reason to believe that a student is at imminent risk of suicide shall report such concerns to the principal or designee. Indicators of imminent risk include, but are not limited to, verbal expressions of suicidal intent, evidence of a suicide attempt, acts of self-harm, or student self-referral. Upon receiving a report, the principal or designee shall ensure that the student is placed under continuous adult supervision. If an in-school suicide attempt occurs, emergency medical services shall be contacted immediately. The principal or designee shall notify the director of schools as soon as practicable.

Before contacting the student's parent/guardian, the director of schools or designee shall assess whether parental notification may pose additional risk to the student. If parental notification is deemed a potential risk, local law enforcement and the Department of Children's Services shall be contacted.

If parental notification is appropriate, the director of schools or designee shall:

1. Inform the parent/guardian of the concern regarding the student's suicide risk.
2. Disclose whether emergency services were contacted.

3. Ask if the parent/guardian intends to or has already sought mental health counseling for the student.
4. Provide a list of community mental health resources if applicable.

If the student is under the age of 16 and the parent/guardian refuses to seek appropriate support, the director of schools shall contact the Department of Children's Services.

The director of schools or designee shall document the incident, including:

1. The time, date, and circumstances leading to the report.
2. A timeline of the actions taken by school personnel.
3. Contact with the parent/guardian, including attempts to reach them.
4. The parent/guardian's response.
5. Time and date of student release to an authorized individual.
6. Anticipated follow-up actions and the development of a safety plan.

Before the student returns to school, the director of schools or designee and/or principal shall meet with the student and their parent/guardian to create a safety plan. This plan shall outline the responsibilities of caregivers and school personnel to ensure the student's safety. The principal shall appoint an employee to periodically meet with the student to monitor well-being and address any concerns.

POSTVENTION

Following a student suicide death, the school or district crisis team shall convene to implement a postvention plan. At a minimum, the plan shall address the following:

1. Verification of the student's death.
2. Preparation of the school and/or district response, including available support services.
3. Informing faculty and staff of the student's passing.
4. Communicating the loss to students in an appropriate manner.
5. Providing information on available resources for students, faculty, and staff.

The crisis team shall collaborate with teachers to identify students who may be particularly affected by the death and provide additional counseling or support as needed. Faculty and staff will also review suicide warning signs and reporting procedures. The director of schools or designee shall handle all media inquiries to ensure accurate and sensitive communication.

This policy shall be reviewed and updated annually to reflect current best practices in youth suicide prevention and compliance with Tennessee Code Annotated.