

Policy 0504.92 Suicide Prevention

The West Ada School District Board of Trustees strives to provide a learning environment that is safe, supportive, healthy, and respectful. Communication and cooperation between the school and home environments are critical steps toward suicide prevention and intervention.

In accordance with Idaho Code 33-512B neither the school district nor a school employee has a duty to warn a parent or protective agency of suicidal tendencies absent the district's or employee's knowledge of direct evidence of such suicidal tendencies. However, the district's administrative personnel and counseling personnel may provide help, guidance and referrals for mental health services at no cost to the district when such administrative and/or counseling personnel have knowledge that a student exhibits signs of potential self-harm.

The Superintendent of the West Ada School District will designate district staff member(s) who will be responsible to draft and implement procedures relating to suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention. Procedures will be reviewed on an annual basis and updated as necessary based on requirements of state law. Procedures will include, but are not limited to the following:

PREVENTION

1. Staff Professional Development: All staff employed by the district are required to participate in annual staff training regarding youth suicide prevention including information about risk factors, warning signs, and response procedures.
2. Youth Suicide Prevention Programing: Developmentally appropriate, student-centered education materials on suicide prevention will be integrated into the curriculum of health classes as it aligns with Idaho State Health Content Standards. The content of these age-appropriate materials will be evidence based or research informed.
3. Community resources and referrals will be available for parents/guardians and adult students, upon inquiry, relating to suicide prevention and general mental health care.

INTERVENTION

1. Specialized Training: School counselors, social workers, school nurses, school psychologists, and building administrators are trained regarding the district's suicide prevention procedures and required documentation process, including how to facilitate a crisis interview,

parental/guardian notifications and to provide community referrals to the parent/guardian of a student who has been identified by a staff person as potentially suicidal.

2. In-School Suicide Attempts: In the case of an in-school suicide attempt, the student will be provided emergency first aid. Other students will be removed from the immediate area. Based on the level of student injury, staff will contact either emergency personnel and/or the parent/guardian. School counselor, school psychologist or school nurse will provide the parent/guardian with referrals for community mental health counseling. Actions taken by school staff will be documented.
3. Out-of-School Suicide Attempts: If a staff member becomes aware of a suicide attempt by a student that is in progress in an out-of-school location, the staff member will call 911 to contact the police. After reporting the incident to the police, the staff member will inform their school administrator and the student's school counselor. The actions taken by the staff member will be documented.
4. Parental Notification and Involvement: If a certified or administrative staff member is given direct evidence of the suicidal tendencies of a student, the student's parent or guardian will be notified by the building administrator or designee. School staff will provide community mental health referrals to the parent/guardian. If school staff, in their professional capacity, believe that contacting the parent or guardian would endanger the health or well-being of the student, Child Protective Services or the local police agency will be contacted and a delay in parent or guardian notification may occur. The reasons for contacting Child Protective Services or local police agency and the delay shall be documented.
5. Re-entry Procedure: Upon notification that a student will be returning to school after a suicide attempt, the school counselor may offer to facilitate a re-entry meeting with the student, parent/guardian, and other appropriate staff. A referral to the school level 504 team may also be considered. School staff will request that the parent/guardian authorize an exchange of confidential information allowing the school staff to communicate with the student's mental health provider.

POSTVENTION (After the death of a student by suicide)

Postvention procedures will include but are not limited to:

1. Development and Implementation of an Action Plan: A trained district crisis team will be available to act in a consultation and supportive role for a building crisis team who are responding to a death of a student by suicide. The building administrator has access to a variety of documents and forms to help create an action plan to guide the school response following a student death by suicide. The action plan will follow national best practices for postvention and will include the following steps: verify the death, assess the situation, share

situationally appropriate information with staff, avoid suicide contagion, and initiate support services for students and staff.

2. External Communication: West Ada Chief Information Officer or district designee will be the sole media spokesperson. Staff will refer all inquiries from the media directly to the district designated spokesperson. The spokesperson will encourage all news media to follow safe messaging guidelines.