

<b>Students</b>	<b>Knox County Board of Education Policy</b>		
	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code:	Issued:
	<b>Student Suicide Prevention</b>	<b>J-580</b>	<b>1/17</b>
		Reviewed:	Revised:
	<b>9/17</b>		

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**SUICIDE STUDENT PREVENTION POLICY**

Knox County Schools is committed to protecting the health and well-being of all students and understands that physical, behavioral, and emotional health are integral components of student achievement. Faculty and staff are expected to be proactive in maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment and to immediately report to the building principal any indications that a student may be in danger of harming himself/herself or others. Students are strongly encouraged to report if they, or another student, are feeling suicidal or in need of help. A summary of available resources shall be annually updated and posted for students.

**PREVENTION**

All district employees shall attend an annual 2 hour in-service training in suicide prevention. The training shall include, but is not limited to, the identification of risk factors, warning signs, interventions and response procedures, referrals, and postvention strategies.<sup>1,2</sup>

The Executive Director of Student Support Services is responsible for planning, coordinating and monitoring the implementation of this policy. Each school principal shall designate a school suicide prevention coordinator to act as a point of contact for issues relating to suicide prevention and policy implementation.

**INTERVENTION**

Any employee who reasonably believes that a student is at imminent risk of suicide shall report such belief to the principal or designee. Indications that a student is at imminent risk of suicide shall include, but are not be limited to, the student verbalizing the desire to commit suicide, evidence of a suicide attempt, and/or an act of self-harm. A student may also complete a student self-referral if he or she feels at risk of suicide. A student should report to a staff member if they believe another student is at imminent risk of suicide. This report should be investigated by staff.

Upon notification, the principal or designee shall ensure the student is placed under continuous adult supervision. A Suicide Threat Assessment will be completed by a school counselor, school psychologist or social worker. Emergency medical services shall be contacted immediately if an in-school suicide attempt occurs. The principal or designee shall contact the Executive Director of Student Support Services.

Prior to contacting the student’s parent/guardian, the director of schools or designee shall determine if there could be further risk of harm resulting from parent/guardian notification. If parent/guardian notification could result in further risk of harm or endanger the health or well-being of the student, then local law enforcement and the Department of Children’s Services shall be contacted.

1 If appropriate, the principal or designee shall contact the student's parent/guardian and provide the  
 2 following information:

- 3 1. Inform the parent/guardian that there is reason to believe the student is at risk of suicide;
- 4 2. Inform the parent/guardian if emergency services were contacted;
- 5 3. Inform the parent/guardian of the results of the Suicide Assessment.
- 6 4. Ask the parent/guardian whether he/she wishes to obtain or has obtained mental health counseling  
 7 for the student;
- 8 5. Provide the names of community mental health counseling resources if appropriate.  
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10 The Director of Schools or designee will seek parental permission to communicate with outside mental  
 11 health care providers regarding a student. If the student is under the age of 16 and the parent/guardian  
 12 refuses to seek appropriate assistance, the Director of Schools or designee shall contact the Department of  
 13 Children's Services. If the student is 16 years of age or over and refuses to seek appropriate assistance,  
 14 the Director of Schools or designee shall contact the Department of Children's Services.<sup>3</sup>

15 The principal or designee shall document the incident, including contact with the parent/guardian, by  
 16 recording:

- 17 1. The time, date and circumstances which resulted in the student coming to the attention of school  
 18 officials;
- 19 2. A timeline of the specific actions taken by school officials;
- 20 3. The parent/guardian contacted, including attempts;
- 21 4. The parent/guardian's response; and
- 22 5. Time and date of release of student to authorized individual.
- 23 6. Anticipated follow-up and safety plan. (Schedule safety plan review date as appropriate.)  
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25 Prior to a student returning to school, the principal and school counselor and/or school psychologist shall  
 26 meet with the student and his/her parent or guardian in order to develop a safety plan. A school support  
 27 team shall convene to determine if additional evaluation and/or supports are needed. The principal will  
 28 identify an employee to periodically meet with the student to monitor his/her safety and address any  
 29 problems or concerns with re-entry.  
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### 31 **POSTVENTION**

32 Immediately following a student suicide death, the school or district crisis team shall meet and develop a  
 33 postvention plan. At a minimum, the postvention plan shall address the following:

- 34 1. Verification of death;
- 35 2. Preparation of school and/or district response, including support services;
- 36 3. Informing faculty and staff of a student death;
- 37 4. Informing students that a death has occurred;
- 38 5. Providing counselors to support students, faculty and staff at the school;
- 39 6. Providing information on the resources available to students, faculty and staff.  
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46 The crisis team shall work with teachers to identify the students most likely to be impacted by the death in  
 47 order to provide additional assistance and counseling if needed. Additionally, staff and faculty will  
 48 immediately review suicide warning signs and reporting requirements.  
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Legal References:

1. T.C.A. § 49-6-1901 et seq.
2. T.C.A. § 49-6-3004(c) (1).
3. T.C.A. § 33-8-202.

Approved as to Legal Form  
By Knox County Law Director 11/29/2016  
*/Gary T. Dupler/Deputy Law Director*