

Model Youth Suicide Prevention Policy

Introduction

California *Education Code (EC)* Section 215, as added by Assembly Bill 2246, (Chapter 642, Statutes of 2016) mandates that the Governing Board of any local educational agency (LEA) that serves pupils in grades seven to twelve, inclusive, adopt a policy on pupil suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention. The policy shall specifically address the needs of high-risk groups, including suicide awareness and prevention training for teachers, and ensure that a school employee acts within the authorization and scope of the employee's credential or license.

For more information on AB 2246 Pupil Suicide Prevention Policies, go to the California Legislative Information Web page at https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160AB2246.

For resources regarding youth suicide prevention, go to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI) letter regarding Suicide Prevention Awareness Month on the California Department of Education (CDE) Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/el/le/yr16ltr0901.asp> and the Directing Change for Schools Web page at <http://www.directingchange.org/schools/>.

Additionally, the CDE encourages each LEA to work closely with their county behavioral health department to identify and access resources at the local level.

While the mandate does not apply to private schools or students below grade seven, we do encourage them to consider adopting a suicide prevention policy as a safety net for all students. This is particularly important since suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth ages fifteen to twenty-four. Students in earlier grades are also known to consider, attempt, and die by suicide - which is also a leading cause of death among ten to twelve-year-olds. Research demonstrates that suicidal ideation may start as early as preschool (however, suicide deaths are very rare among children nine years of age and younger). Although elementary and private schools are not legally required to adhere to AB 2246, they may want to consult with their legal staff about the advisability of adopting such a policy.

San Dieguito Union High School District Youth Suicide Prevention Policy

The Governing Board of San Dieguito Union High School District (SDUHSD) recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among youth, and that an even greater amount of youths (17 percent of high school students) consider and/or attempt (over 8 percent of high school students) suicide. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015)

The possibility of suicide and suicidal ideation requires vigilant attention from our school staff. As a result, we are ethically and legally responsible for providing an appropriate and timely response in preventing suicidal ideation, attempts, and deaths. We also must work to create safe and nurturing campuses that minimize suicidal ideation in students.

Recognizing that it is the duty of the district and schools to protect the health, safety, and welfare of its students, this policy aims to safeguard students and staff against suicide attempts, deaths and other trauma associated with suicide, including ensuring adequate supports for students, staff, and families affected by suicide attempts and loss. As it is known that the emotional wellness of students greatly impacts school attendance and educational success, this policy shall be paired with other policies that support the emotional and behavioral wellness of students.

This policy is based on research and best practices in suicide prevention, and has been adopted with the understanding that suicide prevention activities increase help-seeking behavior, decrease suicide risks, identify those at risk of suicide, and decrease suicidal behaviors. Empirical evidence refutes a common belief that talking about suicide can increase risk or “place the idea in someone’s mind.”

In an attempt to reduce suicidal behavior and its impact on students and families, the Superintendent or Designee shall develop strategies for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention, and the identification of the mental health challenges frequently associated with suicidal thinking and behavior. These strategies shall include professional development for all school personnel in all job categories who regularly interact with students or are in a position to recognize the risk factors and warning signs of suicide, including substitute teachers, volunteers, expanded learning staff (after school) and other individuals in regular contact with students such as crossing guards, tutors, and coaches.

The Superintendent or Designee shall develop and implement preventive strategies and intervention procedures that include the following:

Overall Strategic Plan for Suicide Prevention

The Superintendent or Designee shall involve school-employed mental health professionals (e.g., school counselors, psychologists, social workers, nurses), administrators, other school staff members, parents/guardians/caregivers, students, local health agencies and professionals, law enforcement, and community organizations in planning, implementing, and evaluating the district’s strategies for suicide prevention and intervention. Districts must work in conjunction with local government agencies, community-based organizations, and other community supports to identify additional resources.

San Diego County Sheriff Department Encinitas:	760-966-3500
San Diego Police Department Carmel Valley:	858-523-7000
Carlsbad Police Department:	760-931-2197

Additional community-based resources are available in the *SDUHSD Community Resource Information Guide*, available at <http://www.sduhsd.net/Parents--Students/Student--Parent-Resources/index.html>

To ensure the policies regarding suicide prevention are properly adopted, implemented, and updated, the district shall appoint an individual (or team) to serve as the suicide prevention point of contact for the district. In addition, each school site shall identify at least one staff member (counselor, school psychologist, social worker, administrator) to serve as the liaison to the district's suicide prevention point of contact, and coordinate and implement suicide prevention activities on their specific campus. This policy shall be reviewed and revised as indicated, at least annually in conjunction with the previously mentioned community stakeholders.

Resource:

- The *K–12 Toolkit for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention* has been created to help schools comply with and implement AB 2246 Pupil Suicide Prevention Policies. The Toolkit includes resources for schools as they promote youth mental wellness, intervene in a mental health crisis, and support members of a school community after the loss of someone to suicide.

Additional information about this Toolkit for schools can be accessed on the Heard Alliance Web site at <http://www.heardalliance.org/>.

Prevention

A. Messaging about Suicide Prevention

Messaging about suicide has an effect on suicidal thinking and behaviors. Consequently, SDUHSD along with its partners has critically reviewed and will continue to review all materials and resources used in awareness efforts to ensure they align with best practices for safe messaging about suicide.

Resources:

- For information on public messaging on suicide prevention, see the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention Web site at <http://suicidepreventionmessaging.actionallianceforsuicideprevention.org/>
- For information on engaging the media regarding suicide prevention, see the Your Voice Counts Web page at <http://resource-center.yourvoicecounts.org/content/making-headlines-guide-engaging-media-suicide-prevention-california-0>
- For information on how to use social media for suicide prevention, see the Your Voice Counts Web page at <http://resource-center.yourvoicecounts.org/content/how-use-social-media>

B. Suicide Prevention Training and Education

The San Dieguito Union High School District, along with its partners, has carefully reviewed available staff training to ensure it promotes the mental health model of suicide prevention and does not encourage the use of the stress model to explain suicide.

Training shall be provided for all school staff members and other adults on campus (including substitutes and intermittent staff, volunteers, interns, tutors, and coaches).

Training:

- At least annually, all staff shall receive training on the risk factors and warning signs of suicide, suicide prevention, intervention, referral, and postvention.
- All suicide prevention trainings shall be offered under the direction of school-employed mental health professionals (e.g., school counselors, psychologists, or social workers) who have received advanced training specific to suicide and may benefit from collaboration with one or more county and/or community mental health agencies. Staff training can be adjusted year-to-year based on previous professional development activities and emerging best practices.
- At a minimum, all staff shall participate in training on the core components of suicide prevention (identification of suicide risk factors and warning signs, prevention, intervention, referral, and postvention) at the beginning of their employment. All staff members shall participate in a minimum of one hour of general suicide prevention training. Core components of the general suicide prevention training shall include:
 - Suicide risk factors, warning signs, and protective factors;
 - How to talk with a student about thoughts of suicide;
 - How to respond appropriately to the youth who has suicidal thoughts. Such responses shall include constant supervision of any student judged to be at risk for suicide and an immediate referral for a suicide risk assessment;
 - Emphasis on immediately referring (same day) any student who is identified to be at risk of suicide for assessment while staying under constant monitoring by staff member;
 - Emphasis on reducing stigma associated with mental illness and that early prevention and intervention can drastically reduce the risk of suicide;
 - Reviewing the data annually to look for any patterns or trends of the prevalence or occurrence of suicide ideation, attempts, or death. Data from the California School Climate, Health, and Learning Survey (Cal-SCHLS) should also be analyzed to identify school climate deficits and drive program development. See the Cal-SCHLS Web site at <http://cal-schls.wested.org/>.
- In addition to initial orientations to the core components of suicide prevention, ongoing annual staff professional development for all staff should include the following components:
 - The impact of traumatic stress on emotional and mental health;
 - Common misconceptions about suicide;

- School and community suicide prevention resources;
 - Appropriate messaging about suicide (correct terminology, safe messaging guidelines);
 - The factors associated with suicide (risk factors, warning signs, protective factors);
 - How to identify youth who may be at risk of suicide;
 - Appropriate ways to interact with a youth who is demonstrating emotional distress or is suicidal. Specifically, how to talk with a student about their thoughts of suicide and (based on district guidelines) how to respond to such thinking; how to talk with a student about thoughts of suicide and appropriately respond and provide support based on district guidelines;
 - District-approved procedures for responding to suicide risk (including multi-tiered systems of support and referrals). Such procedures should emphasize that the suicidal student should be constantly supervised until a suicide risk assessment is completed;
 - District-approved procedures for responding to the aftermath of suicidal behavior (suicidal behavior postvention);
 - Responding after a suicide occurs (suicide postvention);
 - Resources regarding youth suicide prevention;
 - Emphasis on stigma reduction and the fact that early prevention and intervention can drastically reduce the risk of suicide;
 - Emphasis that any student who is identified to be at risk of suicide is to be immediately referred (same day) for assessment while being constantly monitored by a staff member.
- The professional development also shall include additional information regarding groups of students judged by the school, and available research, to be at elevated risk for suicide. These groups include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Youth affected by suicide;
 - Youth with a history of suicide ideation or attempts;
 - Youth with disabilities, mental illness, or substance abuse disorders;
 - Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth;
 - Youth experiencing homelessness or in out-of-home settings, such as foster care;
 - Youth who have suffered traumatic experiences.

Resources:

- Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) teaches a 5-step action plan to offer initial help to young people showing signs of a mental illness or in a crisis, and connect them with the appropriate professional, peer, social, or self-help care. YMHFA is an 8-hour interactive training for youth-serving adults without a mental health background. See the Mental Health First Aid Web page at <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/cs/take-a-course/course-types/youth/>

- Free YMHFA Training is available on the CDE Mental Health Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/cg/mh/projectcalwell.asp>
- Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR) is a gatekeeper training that can be taught online. Just as people trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the Heimlich maneuver help save thousands of lives each year, people trained in QPR learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade, and refer someone to help. See the QPR Web site at <http://www.qprinstitute.com/>
- SafeTALK is a half-day alertness training that prepares anyone over the age of fifteen, regardless of prior experience or training, to become a suicide-alert helper. See the LivingWorks Web page at <https://www.livingworks.net/programs/safetalk/>
- Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) is a two-day interactive workshop in suicide first aid. ASIST teaches participants to recognize when someone may have thoughts of suicide and work with them to create a plan that will support their immediate safety. See the LivingWorks Web page at <https://www.livingworks.net/programs/asist/>
- Kognito At-Risk is an evidence-based series of three online interactive professional development modules designed for use by individuals, schools, districts, and statewide agencies. It includes tools and templates to ensure that the program is easy to disseminate and measures success at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. See the Kognito Web page at <https://www.kognito.com/products/pk12/>

C. Employee Qualifications and Scope of Services

Employees of SDUHSD and their partners must act only within the authorization and scope of their credential or license. While it is expected that school professionals are able to identify suicide risk factors and warning signs, and to prevent the immediate risk of a suicidal behavior, treatment of suicidal ideation is typically beyond the scope of services offered in the school setting. In addition, treatment of the mental health challenges often associated with suicidal thinking typically requires mental health resources beyond what schools are able to provide.

D. Specialized Staff Training (Assessment)

Additional professional development in suicide risk assessment and crisis intervention shall be provided to mental health professionals (school counselors, psychologists, social workers, and nurses) employed by SDUHSD.

Resource:

- Assessing and Managing Suicide Risk (AMSR) is a one-day training workshop for behavioral health professionals based on the latest research and designed to help participants provide safer suicide care. See the Suicide Prevention Resource Center Web page at <http://www.sprc.org/training-events/amsr>

E. Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers Participation and Education

- To the extent possible, parents/guardians/caregivers should be included in all suicide prevention efforts. At a minimum, schools shall share with parents/ guardians/ caregivers the SDUHSD suicide prevention policy and procedures.
- This suicide prevention policy shall be prominently displayed on the SDUHSD website and included in the student and parent resource guide.
- Parents/guardians/caregivers should be invited to provide input on the development and implementation of this policy.
- All parents/guardians/caregivers should have access to suicide prevention training that addresses the following:
 - Suicide risk factors, warning signs, and protective factors;
 - How to talk with a student about thoughts of suicide;
 - How to respond appropriately to the student who has suicidal thoughts. Such responses shall include constant supervision of any student judged to be at risk for suicide and referral for an immediate suicide risk assessment.

Resource:

- Parents as Partners: A Suicide Prevention Guide for Parents is a booklet that contains useful information for parents/guardians/caregivers who are concerned that their children may be at risk for suicide. It is available from Suicide Awareness Voices of Education (SAVE). See the SAVE Web page at <https://www.save.org/product/parents-as-partners/>

F. Student Participation and Education

The San Dieguito Union High School District along with its partners has carefully reviewed available student curricula to ensure it promotes the mental health model of suicide prevention and does not encourage the use of the stress model to explain suicide.

Under the supervision of school-employed mental health professionals, and following consultation with county and community mental health agencies, students shall:

- Receive developmentally appropriate, student-centered education about the warning signs of mental health challenges and emotional distress;
- Receive developmentally appropriate guidance regarding the district's suicide prevention, intervention, and referral procedures.
- The content of the education shall include:
 - Coping strategies for dealing with stress and trauma;

- How to recognize behaviors (warning signs) and life issues (risk factors) associated with suicide and mental health issues in oneself and others;
- Help-seeking strategies for oneself and others, including how to engage school-based and community resources and refer peers for help;
- Emphasis on reducing the stigma associated with mental illness and the fact that early prevention and intervention can drastically reduce the risk of suicide.

Student-focused suicide prevention education can be incorporated into classroom curricula (e.g., health, freshman orientation, science, and physical education classes).

SDUHSD will support the creation and implementation of programs and/or activities on campus that raise awareness about mental wellness and suicide prevention (e.g., Mental Health Awareness Weeks, Peer Counseling Programs, Freshman Success Programs, and National Alliance on Mental Illness on Campus High School Clubs).

Resources:

- *More Than Sad* is school-ready and evidence-based training material, listed on the national Suicide Prevention Resource Center's best practices list, specifically designed for teen-level suicide prevention. See the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Web page at <https://afsp.org/our-work/education/more-than-sad/>
- *Break Free from Depression* (BFFD) is a 4-module curriculum focused on increasing awareness about adolescent depression and designed for use in high school classrooms. See the Boston Children's Hospital Web page at <http://www.childrenshospital.org/breakfree>
- *Coping and Support Training* (CAST) is an evidence-based life-skills training and social support program to help at-risk youth. See the Reconnecting Youth Inc. Web page at <http://www.reconnectingyouth.com/programs/cast/>
- *Students Mobilizing Awareness and Reducing Tragedies* (SMART) is a program comprised of student-led groups in high schools designed to give students the freedom to implement a suicide prevention on their campus that best fits their school's needs. See the SAVE Web page at <https://www.save.org/what-we-do/education/smart-schools-program-2/>
- *Linking Education and Awareness for Depression and Suicide (LEADS) for Youth* is a school-based suicide prevention curriculum designed for high schools and educators that links depression awareness and secondary suicide prevention. LEADS for Youth is an informative and interactive opportunity for students and teachers to increase knowledge and awareness of depression and suicide. See the SAVE Web page at <https://www.save.org/what-we-do/education/leads-for-youth-program/>

Intervention, Assessment, Referral

A. Staff

Two SDUHSD staff members who have received advanced training in suicide intervention shall be designated as the primary and secondary suicide prevention liaisons. Whenever a

staff member suspects or has knowledge of a student's suicidal intentions, they shall promptly notify the school site designated suicide prevention liaisons (administrator, counselor, school psychologist, social worker). If the designated liaisons at the school site are all unavailable, the staff member shall promptly notify the district designated primary, Melissa Sage, or secondary, Meredith Wadley, suicide prevention liaison.

- The names, titles, and contact information of the designated site team members shall be distributed to all students, staff, parents/guardians/caregivers and be prominently available on school and district websites. If the designated school site contact persons are not available, the reporting staff member shall notify the principal, another school administrator, school psychologist or counselor.

The principal, another school administrator, school counselor, school psychologist, social worker, or nurse shall then notify, if appropriate and in the best interest of the student, the student's parents/guardians/caregivers as soon as possible and shall refer the student to mental health resources in the school or community. Determination of notification to parents/guardians/caregivers should follow a formal initial assessment to ensure that the student is not endangered by parental notification.

If the student is in imminent danger (has access to a weapon, is on a rooftop, or in other unsafe conditions), staff will immediately call 911.

- Whenever a staff member suspects or has knowledge of a student's suicidal intentions, they shall promptly notify the school site designated suicide prevention liaisons (administrator, counselor, school psychologist, social worker).
- Students experiencing suicidal ideation shall not be left unsupervised.
- A referral process should be prominently disseminated to all staff members, so they know how to respond to a crisis and are knowledgeable about the school and community-based resources.
- The Superintendent or Designee shall establish crisis intervention procedures to ensure student safety and appropriate communications if a suicide occurs or an attempt is made by a student or adult on campus or at a school-sponsored activity.

B. Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers

A referral process should be prominently disseminated to all parents/ guardians/ caregivers, so they know how to respond to a crisis and are knowledgeable about the school and community-based resources.

C. Students

Students shall be encouraged to notify a staff member when they are experiencing emotional distress or suicidal ideation, or when they suspect or have knowledge of another student's emotional distress, suicidal ideation, or attempt.

D. Parental Notification and Involvement

Each school within SDUHSD shall follow a process to ensure continuing care for the student identified to be at risk of suicide. The following steps should be followed to ensure continuity of care:

- After parent/guardian/caregiver contact is made for a student, school staff shall verify with the parent/guardian/caregiver that follow-up treatment has been accessed. Parents/guardians/caregivers will be encouraged to provide documentation of care for the student to school staff.
- If parents/guardians/caregivers refuse or neglect to access treatment for a student who has been identified to be at-risk for suicide or in emotional distress, the suicide point of contact (or other appropriate school staff member) will meet with the parents/guardians/caregivers to identify barriers to treatment (e.g., cultural stigma, financial issues) and work to rectify the situation and build understanding of the importance of care. If follow-up care for the student is still not provided, school staff should consider contacting Child Protective Services (CPS) to report neglect of the youth. CPS Contact Information: To file a report: 858-560-2191 or 800-344-6000; to obtain the form: http://ag.ca.gov/childabuse/pdf/ss_8572.pdf ; completed hard copy report can be faxed to 858-467-0412.

E. Action Plan for In-School Suicide Attempts

If a suicide attempt is made during the school day on campus, it is important to remember that the health and safety of the student and those around him/her is critical. The following steps should be implemented:

- Remain calm - remember the student is overwhelmed, confused, and emotionally distressed;
- Move all other students out of the immediate area;
- Call 911 and give them as much information about any suicide note, medications taken, and access to weapons, if applicable;
- Immediately contact the site administrator or suicide prevention liaison;
- If needed, provide medical first aid until a medical professional is available;
- Parents/guardians/caregivers should be contacted as soon as possible;
- Do not send the student away or leave them alone, even to go to the restroom;
- Listen and prompt the student to talk;
- Review options and resources of people who can help;
- Be comfortable with moments of silence as you and the student will need time to process the situation;
- Provide comfort to the student;
- Promise privacy and help, and be respectful, but do not promise confidentiality;

- Student should only be released to parents/guardians/caregivers or to a person who is qualified and trained to provide help (e.g. LEO, PERT).

F. Action Plan for Out-of-School At-Risk Students

If an SDUHSD staff member is notified of a suicidal student who is in imminent danger outside of school (e.g. student is at home during school day, evening, weekend, school break, holiday), the staff member should call 911 and give them as much information about the student location and threat as possible. The staff member should follow up by notifying the designated primary site liaison for follow up.

G. Action Plan for Out-of-School Student Suicide Attempts

If an SDUHSD staff member is notified of a suicide attempt outside of school, it is crucial that the LEA protects the privacy of the student and maintain a confidential record of the actions taken to intervene, support, and protect the student. The following steps should be implemented:

- Contact the parents/guardians/caregivers and offer support to the family;
- Discuss with the family how they would like the school to respond to the attempt while minimizing widespread rumors among teachers, staff, and students;
- Obtain permission from the parents/guardians/caregivers to share information to ensure the facts regarding the crisis is correct;
- Provide care and determine appropriate support to affected students;
- Offer the student and parents/guardians/caregivers steps for reintegration into school.
- If necessary, designate a district media spokesperson (superintendent and/or principal) to handle all responses to the event without divulging confidential information and without the use of graphic, or dramatic content as research has proven that sensationalized media coverage can lead to contagious suicidal behaviors. The district's response shall focus on the district's postvention plan and available resources. (go to the Reporting on Suicide.Org Web site at www.reportingonsuicide.org).

H. Supporting Students after a Mental Health Crisis

It is crucial that careful steps are taken to help provide ongoing mental health support for the student and to continue to monitor actions for any signs of suicide.

- Keep close contact with the parents/guardians/caregivers and mental health professionals working with the student.
- Treat every threat with seriousness and approach with a calm manner; make the student a priority;
- Listen actively and non-judgmentally to the student. Let the student express his or her feelings; Acknowledge the feelings and do not argue with the student;

- Explain calmly and get the student to a trained professional, guidance counselor, or designated staff to further support the student;
- Offer hope and let the student know they are safe and that help is provided. Do not promise confidentiality nor cause additional stress;
- After any suicide or attempted suicide by a student, the Superintendent or designee shall provide an opportunity for all staff who responded to the incident to debrief, evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies used, and make recommendations for future actions.

I. Re-Entry to School After a Suicide Attempt

Students who threatened or attempted suicide are at higher risk for suicide in the months following the crisis. Having a well-planned re-entry process ensures the safety and wellbeing of students who have previously attempted suicide and reduces the risk of another attempt. An appropriate re-entry process is an important component of suicide prevention. Involving students in planning for their return to school provides them with a sense of control, personal responsibility, and empowerment.

The following steps shall be implemented upon re-entry:

- Obtain a written release of information signed by parents/guardians/caregivers and providers;
- Confer with student and parents/guardians/caregivers about any specific recommendations or requests for how to handle the situation;
- Work with parents/guardians/caregivers to involve student in an aftercare plan.
- Inform the student's teachers about possible days of absences;
- Allow accommodations for student to make up work (be understanding that missed assignments may add stress to student);
- Implement a Student Safety plan
- Mental health professionals or trusted staff members should maintain ongoing contact to monitor student's actions and mood;

Resource:

- The *School Re-entry for a Student Who Has Attempted Suicide or Made Serious Suicidal Threats* is a guide to assist in school reentry for students after an attempted suicide. See Mental Health Recovery Services Resource Web page at http://www.mhrsonline.org/resources/suicide%5Cattempted_suicide_resources_for_schools-9/

J. Responding After a Suicide Death (Postvention)

A death by suicide in the school community (whether by a student or staff member) can have profound effects on students and staff. Therefore, it is vital that we are prepared ahead of time in the event of such a tragedy. SDUHSD District Primary and Secondary Suicide Prevention Liaisons shall ensure that each school site follows an action plan for responding to a suicide

death. The Suicide Postvention Response Plan needs to incorporate both immediate and long-term steps and objectives.

- The Suicide Postvention Response Plan shall:
 - Identify a staff member (school site administrator) to confirm death and cause and notify district primary and secondary liaisons;
 - Identify a staff member to contact the deceased's family (within 24 hours);
 - Enact the Suicide Postvention Response Plan, including an initial meeting of the district/school Suicide Postvention Response Team (administrators, counselors, school psychologist, social worker);
 - Notify all staff members (ideally in person or via phone, not via e-mail or mass notification).
- Coordinate an all-staff meeting, to include:
 - Notification (if not already conducted) to staff about suicide death;
 - Emotional support and resources available to staff;
 - Notification to students about suicide death and the availability of support services (if this is the protocol that is decided by administration);
 - Share relevant information which you have permission to disclose, emphasizing it is crucial that the school protects the privacy of the student and family.
- Prepare staff to respond to needs of students regarding the following:
 - Review of protocols for referring students for support/assessment and best practices for processing grief.
 - Talking points for staff to notify students;
 - Resources available to students (on and off campus).
- Identify students significantly affected by suicide death and other students at risk of imitative behavior;
- Identify students affected by suicide death but not at risk of imitative behavior;
- Communicate with the larger school community about the suicide death;
- Consider funeral arrangements for family and school community;
- Designate a district media spokesperson (superintendent and/or principal) to handle all responses to the event without divulging confidential information and without the use of explicit, graphic, or dramatic content as research has proven that sensationalized media coverage can lead to contagious suicidal behaviors. The district's response shall focus on the district's postvention plan and available resources. (go to the Reporting on Suicide.Org Web site at www.reportingonsuicide.org).

- Respond to memorial requests in respectful and non-harmful manner; responses should be handed in a thoughtful way and their impact on other students should be considered. Research has identified an increased risk of suicide among youth who are grieving the suicide of another (suicide “contagion”). The National Association of School Psychologists’ *Preventing Suicide, Guidelines for Administrators and Crisis Teams* recommends that memorials should be implemented with care so as not to sensationalize suicide and thereby increase the suicide risk to other students. If a memorial is conducted for a student who dies by suicide, the association suggests a living memorial, such as making donations to a local crisis center, participating in an event that raises awareness about suicide prevention, or providing other opportunities for service activities in the school.
- Include longer term suicide postvention responses:
 - Consider important dates (i.e., anniversary of death, deceased birthday, graduation, or other significant event) and how these will be addressed
 - Support siblings, close friends, teachers, and/or students of deceased
 - Consider long-term memorials and how they may impact students who are emotionally vulnerable and at risk of suicide

Resources:

- After a Suicide: A Toolkit for School is a comprehensive guide that will assist schools on what to do if a suicide death takes place in the school community. See the Suicide Prevention Resource Center Web page at <http://www.sprc.org/comprehensive-approach/postvention>
- Help & Hope for Survivors of Suicide Loss is a guide to help those during the bereavement process and who were greatly affected by the death of a suicide. See the Suicide Prevention Resource Center Web page at <http://www.sprc.org/resources-programs/help-hope-survivors-suicide-loss>
- For additional information on suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention, see the Mental Health Recovery Services Model Protocol Web page at http://www.mhrsonline.org/resources/suicide%5Cattempted_suicide_resources_for_schools-9/
- Information on school climate and safety is available on the CDE Safe Schools Planning Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/vp/safeschlplanning.asp>
- Additional resources regarding student mental health needs can be found in the SSPI letter *Responding to Student Mental Health Needs in School Safety Planning* at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/el/le/yr14ltr0212.asp>