

Policy

SUICIDE PREVENTION

The Frenchtown Board of Education believes the physical and mental well-being of all students must be maintained as a prerequisite to achievement in education. The board endeavors to ensure the appropriate awareness regarding adolescent suicide by establishing, developing and implementing suicide awareness and prevention programs in this school district.

The board believes that the staff, students, and the school community can benefit from and contribute toward the prevention of adolescent suicide. The board directs the superintendent or his or her designee to develop and implement a comprehensive and continuing suicide awareness and prevention program for the school and the community that at a minimum shall include:

- A. Education and training programs directed at awareness and prevention of adolescent suicide;
- B. Staff training on:
 - 1. Warning signs of adolescent suicide;
 - 2. Response in a suicidal crisis; and
 - 3. Reporting procedures for suspected suicidal ideation.
- C. Identification of community resources for training and referral.

School Personnel

The board directs all school personnel to be alert to students who exhibit signs of potential self-destructive behavior or who threaten or attempt suicide. The school counselor or child study team member or his or her designee shall provide training to staff for the identification of the signs/symptoms of depression and suicidal ideation; the connection of depression and suicidal behavior to harassment, intimidation and bullying; and school reporting procedures. The goal of training shall be to instruct school staff, parents/guardians, and students to:

- A. Understand the causes of self-destructive behavior and suicide;
- B. Recognize the early warning signs of self-destructive and suicidal behavior;
- C. Learn how to help in a suicidal crisis;
- D. Identify community resources and procedures that can help a self-destructive or suicidal person;
- E. Cope with the aftermath of such a tragedy.

Any suspicion of the signs/symptoms and the report of signs/symptoms from another student or staff member should be taken with the utmost seriousness and reported immediately to the building principal, who will notify the student's parent/guardian and other professional staff members in accordance with administrative regulations.

The superintendent or his or her designee shall ensure that a continuing cooperative affiliation is made with local community mental health agencies to assist in following the procedures in the event the necessary professional expertise is not adequately available within the school district during an emergency of this nature.

The student's parents/guardians shall be notified immediately of incidents or suspicion of potential self-destructive behavior. The cooperation of parents/guardians shall be sought for immediate intervention. If the parent/guardian is unwilling to cooperate, the school administration and/or crisis team shall contact appropriate agencies to request intervention on the student's behalf. In cases of child abuse or neglect, school personnel are required to contact the New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency.

The child study team will be consulted for appropriate evaluation and/or recommendation for independent medical or psychiatric services for a potentially at-risk student. In the event that the parent or guardian objects to the recommended evaluation or indicates an unwillingness to cooperate in the best interests of the student, school personnel should contact the New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency to request that the agency intervention on the student's behalf.

The superintendent will, in consultation with appropriate teaching staff members and mental health organizations, develop and implement a program as necessary for students exhibiting self-destructive behaviors in grades K through 8. The program will address problems of depression, help students toward alternative ways of resolving stressful situations, and encourage students to help one another.

The superintendent shall develop regulations and procedures for the implementation of the program. The policy and procedure shall be disseminated to staff, students and parents/guardians.

Adopted: No date
NJSBA Review/Update: September 2016
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Key Words

Suicide, self-Destructive Behavior, Attempted Suicide, Trauma

Legal References: N.J.S.A. 18A:1011-1 General mandatory powers and duties
N.J.S.A. 30:9A-12 Youth suicide prevention program

Cross References:

*1410	Local units
*5000	Concepts and roles in student personnel
*5010	Personal goals and objectives for students
*5020	Role of parents/guardians
*5113	Attendance, absences and excuses
*5114	Suspension and expulsion
*5120	Assessment of individual needs
*5124	Reporting to parents/guardians
*5125	Student records
*5131	Conduct/discipline
*5131.6	Drugs, alcohol, tobacco (substance abuse)
*5131.7	Weapons and dangerous instruments
*5141	Student health
*5141.1	Accidents
*5141.2	Illness
*5141.21	Administering medication
*5142	Safety
*6164.2	Guidance Services
*6164.4	Child study team

*Indicates policy is included in the Critical Policy Reference Manual.