

Suicide Prevention Training Policy

Section 1. Staff Training

Teachers, school counselors, principals and other school administrators shall receive two hours of annual in-service training in suicide prevention. The training shall address the following:

1. increasing awareness of risk factors, including, but not limited to the following:
 - a. mental health and substance abuse conditions;
 - b. childhood abuse, neglect, and trauma;
 - c. potential causes of stress, such as bullying, harassment, and relationship problems;
 - d. secondary trauma from a suicide or sensationalized or graphic accounts of suicide in media; and
 - e. history of suicide attempts and related family history;
2. responding to suspicious behavior or warning signs exhibited by students;
3. responding to crisis situations in which a student is an imminent danger to himself;
4. policies and protocol for communication with parents, including specifications for circumstances in which parental notification is not in the best interest of the student;
5. counseling services available within the school for students and their families related to suicide prevention;
6. information concerning crisis intervention, suicide prevention, and mental health services in the community for students and their families and school employees;
7. community organizations and agencies for referral of students to health, mental health, substance abuse, and social support services, including development of at least one memorandum of understanding between the school system and such an entity in the community or region.

If the school issues student identification cards, they shall have printed on the cards the following information:

1. the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline hotline number; and
2. a local suicide prevention hotline number, if available.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 17:6, 17:13.1, R.S. 17:283, and R.S. 17:403.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, LR 31:1278 (June 2005), amended LR 39:2208 (August 2013), LR 45:1746 (December 2019).

Section 2. Student Training

As part of an existing, relevant course of instruction, the school shall offer age- and grade-appropriate evidence-based training on suicide prevention and student safety and violence and social isolation prevention to students in grades six through twelve. For purposes of this policy, "evidence-based" shall mean the training meets one of the following criteria:

- (a) Demonstrates a rationale based on high-quality research findings or positive evaluation that such a program or practice is likely to improve relevant outcomes and includes ongoing efforts to examine the effects of the program or practice.
- (b) Has a statistically significant effect on relevant outcomes based on one of the following:
 - (i) Strong evidence from at least one experimental study.
 - (ii) Moderate evidence from at least one quasi-experimental study.
 - (iii) Promising evidence from at least one correlation study with statistical controls for selection bias.

(2) Each student shall receive not less than one hour or one standard class period, whichever is shorter, of training in suicide prevention per year. Such training may be administered through student assemblies or in-person, video, or a combination of in-person and video training and shall include but need not be limited to:

(a) How to identify observable warning signs and signals of an individual who may be at risk of harming themselves.

(b) The steps students can take to report harmful or potentially harmful activity.

(3) Each student shall receive not less than one hour or one standard class period, whichever is shorter, of training in student safety and violence and social isolation prevention per year. Such training may be administered through student assemblies, digital learning, and homework and shall include but need not be limited to:

(a) How to identify observable warning signs and signals of an individual who may be at risk of harming others.

(b) The importance of taking threats seriously and seeking help.

(c) The steps students can take to report dangerous, violent, or threatening activity.

(d) What social isolation is and how to identify social isolation in others.

(e) The importance of taking social isolation seriously and seeking help for peers.

(f) How to utilize strategies to be more socially inclusive in the classroom and community and how to establish connections with others.

(4) Upon written request of a student's parent or legal guardian, a student shall be excused from any of the training.

The school governing authority shall allow the creation of a student-led club focused on suicide prevention, student safety, and violence and social isolation prevention for each school under its jurisdiction that has students in grades six through twelve. Each club shall:

(1) Be open to any member of the student population.

(2) Have at least one school employee serve as an advisor.

(3) Develop and maintain awareness activities related to suicide prevention or student safety and violence and social isolation prevention training.

(4) Foster opportunities for student leadership development.

Acts 2001, No. 729, §1, eff. June 25, 2001; Acts 2019, No. 93, §1; Acts 2022, No. 643, §2, eff. July 1, 2023.

RS 17:282.4