

POLICY JLE **Board of Education**
Las Cruces Public Schools

Related Entries: JICFB, JICL, JICL-R, JICL-E1, JICL-E2, JICL E-3, JICL E-4, JICL E-5, JICL E-6, JLD, RLD-RA

Responsible Office: Associate Superintendent of Equity Innovation and Social Justice

Suicide Awareness and Prevention

I. PURPOSE

The Board of Education is committed to protecting the health and well-being of all students. The purpose of this Policy is to establish processes to prevent, assess the risk of, intervene and respond to suicide.

II. BACKGROUND

- A. The LCPS Board of Education Recognizes that physical and mental health are integral components of student outcomes, both educationally and beyond graduation.
- B. The Board also recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among young people.
- C. The Board acknowledges the school’s role in taking proactive measures in preventing death by suicide by having a comprehensive suicide policy that includes prevention, intervention and postvention.

III. DEFINITIONS

At risk are those students who engage in self-harm or have attempted suicide, those in out-of-home settings, those experiencing homelessness, American Indian/Alaska Native students, LGBTQ students, students bereaved by suicide, and those with medical conditions or certain types of disabilities. In addition, any student who expresses intent to die by suicide or has displayed a significant change in behavior suggesting the onset or deterioration of a mental health condition is at risk.

Crisis Team is a multidisciplinary team of administrative, behavioral health, health services, and security professionals who will be trained in suicide awareness, prevention, intervention and response.

Postvention is a crisis intervention strategy designed to reduce the risk of suicide and suicide contagion, provide support needed to help survivors cope with a suicide death, address the social stigma associated with suicide, and disseminate factual information after the suicide death of a member of the school community.

Self-harm is behavior that is self-directed and deliberately results in injury or the potential for injury to oneself. It can be categorized as either suicidal or non-suicidal.

Suicide is death caused by self-directed injurious behavior with any intent to die as a result of the behavior.

Suicide attempt is self-injurious behavior for which there is evidence that the person had at least some intent to kill himself or herself. A suicide attempt may result in death, injuries, or no injuries.

Suicidal behavior includes suicide attempts, intentional injury to self associated with at least some level of intent, developing a plan or strategy for suicide, gathering the means for a suicide plan, or any other overt action or thought indicating intent to end one's life.

Suicide contagion is the process by which suicidal behavior or a suicide influences an increase in the suicidal behaviors of others. Guilt, ideation, and modeling are each thought to play a role in contagion. Although rare, suicide contagion can result in a cluster of suicides.

Suicidal ideation is thinking about, considering, or planning for self-injurious behavior which may result in death. A desire to be dead without a plan or intent to end one's life is still considered suicidal ideation and should be taken seriously.

IV. POSITION

- A. The expectation of the Board is that every school have written protocols for implementing suicide awareness and prevention, assessment and referral options for students who are identified as potentially suicidal, and how to respond following a death by suicide.
- B. The Las Cruces Public Schools will comply with New Mexico Public Education Department requirements for site-specific School Safety Plans with the expectation that every school has a crisis team, whose members are identified by name. This information shall be published in such a way that it is accessible to students and their families.
- C. The district shall support at-risk student groups including those who engage in self-harm or have attempted suicide, those in out-of-home settings, those experiencing homelessness, American Indian/Alaska Native students, LGBTQ students, other students who may be prone to emotional overexcitabilities such as the highly gifted, students bereaved by suicide, and those with medical conditions or certain types of disabilities through resource allocation, community partnerships, school-based mental health supports, and policy which

supports culturally responsive and trauma informed practices.

- D. The Board further expects that once a school knows of a possible threat of self-harm including suicidal behavior or suicidal ideation, it will take protective action to include notifying parents or guardians.
- E. The Board acknowledges that suicide should be an open topic of conversation and encourages training that teaches staff, students, families and the community to engage in safe conversations that bring awareness to and help prevent suicide.

V. **REVIEW**

This policy shall be reviewed on an ongoing basis in accordance with the Board of Education policy review process.



Board of Education, President

2/18/20

Date Approved

History: New Policy

Legal Reference: 34 CFR 99.36, (NMAC) 6.12.6