

Suicide Prevention

The Tonasket Board of Directors recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among youth and that suicidal indicators such as substance abuse and violence are complex issues and should be taken seriously. While district staff may recognize potentially suicidal youth and the district can make an initial risk assessment, the district cannot provide in-depth mental health counseling. Instead, the board directs district staff to refer students who exhibit suicidal behaviors to an appropriate service for further assessment and counseling.

District staff who have knowledge of a suicide threat must take the proper steps to support the student and to report this information to the building principal or designee who will, in turn, notify the appropriate school officials, the student's family and appropriate resource services.

The board also recognizes the need for youth suicide prevention procedures. The district will adopt and, at the beginning of each school year, provide to all district staff, including substitute and regular bus drivers, a plan for recognizing, screening, referring and responding to students in emotional or behavioral distress. At a minimum, the plan will:

- Identify training opportunities for staff on recognizing, screening and referral of students in emotional or behavioral distress, including those who exhibit indicators of substance or sexual abuse, violence or suicide;
- Describe how to utilize the expertise of district staff trained in recognition, screening and referral;
- Provide guidelines, based on staff expertise, for responding to suspicions, concerns or warning signs of emotional or behavioral distress;
- Address development of partnerships with community organizations and agencies for referral of students to support services, to include development of at least one memorandum of understanding between the district and one such entity;
- Contain procedures for communication with parents and guardians, including notification requirements in accordance with RCW 28A.320.160;
- Describe how staff should respond to a crisis situation where a student is in imminent danger to himself or herself or others;
- Describe how the district will provide support to students and staff after an incident of violence, or student suicide or allegations of sexual abuse of a student;
- Describe how staff should respond when allegations of sexual contact or abuse are made against a staff member, volunteer, parent, guardian or family member of the student, including how staff should interact with parents, law enforcement and child protective services;
- Describe how the district will provide certificated and classified staff training on the obligation to report physical abuse or sexual misconduct required under RCW 28A.400.317.

The superintendent will develop and implement the plan and a staff training schedule to achieve the board's goals and objectives.

Cross References: Policy 2140 Guidance and Counseling
Policy 3207 Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying

Legal References: RCW 28A.410.043 School Counselor Certification
RCW 28A.320.127 Plan for recognition, screening, and response to
emotional or behavioral distress in students
RCW 28A.410.226 Washington professional educator standards board –
Training program on youth suicide screening – Certificates for school
nurses, social workers, psychologists and counselors –Adoption of standards
RCW 28A.320.1271 Model school district plan for recognition, initial
screening, and response to emotional or behavioral distress in students

Management 2016 – July Issue
Resources 2014 – December Issue
Policy News, April 2011 Youth Suicide Awareness and
Prevention Plans

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